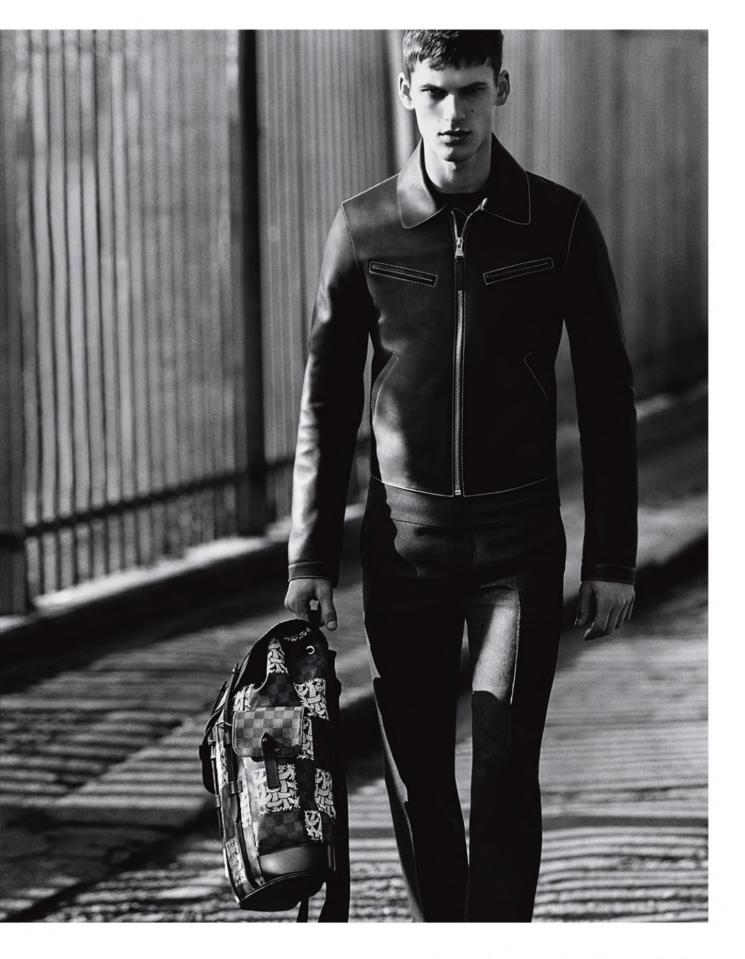




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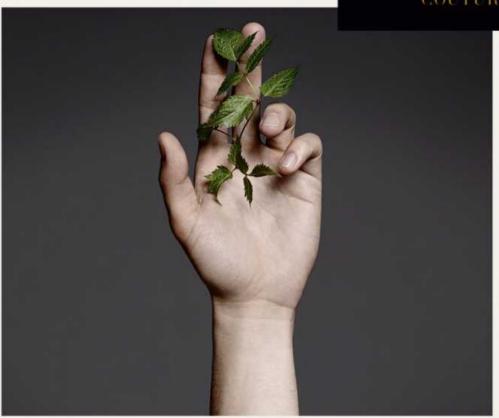


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## Welcome to America

Dear Papa Francesco,

Around my neck I wear a medal that belonged to my uncle, Father Michael G. Pierce, S.J. He was a prominent Jesuit of the New England Province, which I realize is pretty well down the pecking order from where you're sitting these days, but it still made him a pretty big deal in the Society, as he called it. I grew up with him, and with the Jesuits of his generation. These included Father Finnegan, a onetime Navy chaplain who, as far as I knew, was the leading clerical expert on the New York City gang wars of the 1950s. At various family gatherings, which Finnegan used to attend as an honorary member of the family, I learned that when arguing anything with the members of the Society, whether that argument concerns the magisterium of the church or the internecine rivalries of the Gambino family, you bring your A game or you get your stuff seriously fucked up. (Sorry. That's the way Americans talk.) The Society didn't get formal control of my schooling until 1971, when I enrolled at Marquette University, but I guess you could say that, intellectually anyway, the Society raised me. It raised me to question every answer. It raised me to think critically and to act out of what we used to call in the church my "informed conscience." Throw up a barricade on any issue involving the church and you'll find Jesuits on both sides of it, arguing. And me, too, I suppose.

The medal I wear around my neck is that of Ignatius Loyola, the Society's founder. I remember the first time I read the Daily Examen, one of his spiritual exercises that's aimed at finding "God in all things," and I remember what the Jesuit intellectual and paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said about how God applied to his various digs around the world. "God is not remote from us," he wrote. "He is at the point of my pen, my pick, my paintbrush, my needle--and my heart and my thoughts." So when the fathers of Vatican II proclaimed that the church was not its institutional structure but "the entire People of God," I was already halfway to believing that because I'd been taught to believe it.

With all due respect, Papa Francesco, Jesuits aren't even supposed to be pope. You all take a vow not to seek higher office in the church. However, because you're also bound by obedience to the church, I guess even the Holy Spirit can act in a fashion we can call "Jesuitical." Since your election, though, your papacy has been bound by that principle of finding God in the world. You teach without judging. You explore ideas without binding them so firmly to dogma that they become stunted. You've opened the mind of the church to the mind of the world.

Take, for example, the profound moral issue of global climate change, on which you issued your encyclical Laudato Si. In it you expressed a certain impatience with the people who are making careers out of not only minimizing the extent of the climate-change crisis but also denying that the crisis exists at all.



"In the meantime," you wrote, "economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment."

In this country, half our political system is composed of people dedicated to denying the simple truth of that encyclical. You see, we, as Americans, are used to popes who skate their lane. (That's an ice-hockey term. Ice hockey is like your beloved fútbol, except with skates and Canadians, though with a similar amount of biting.) You may have heard of the phrase "cafeteria Catholics." It's been around awhile. But since you were elected, the lines in the cafeteria have gotten longer, and they've often been running in the opposite direction from that to which the politicians were accustomed. These same conservative Catholics were quick to explain to those of us who disagreed with their ultramontane triumphalism that we were free to leave the church any time we liked. Many of us stayed because we believed, as did the fathers at Vatican II, that the church was the entire People of God and that nobody had the right to tell us we no longer were part of what our baptism made us. And, suddenly, here you came, speaking not as the voice of an institution but as someone who, like Moses, has spent some time praying outside the camp, as so many of us have come to do, and as someone who has married reason and science to faith in a way that energizes both of them, someone who does not fear knowledge but embraces it, regardless of its effect on petrified doctrine.

With all due respect to most of your predecessors, even the ones who were married and had children and real armies and were Borgias, what's left of the papacy now is only the worldwide pulpit from which you can speak. Paul VI's misbegotten encyclical on artificial birth control was so far out of touch with how people live their actual lives that even American Catholics realized they could ignore the pope and receive communion in good conscience. The sex-abuse scandal detonated beneath whatever moral credibility on matters of sexuality was left in your office.

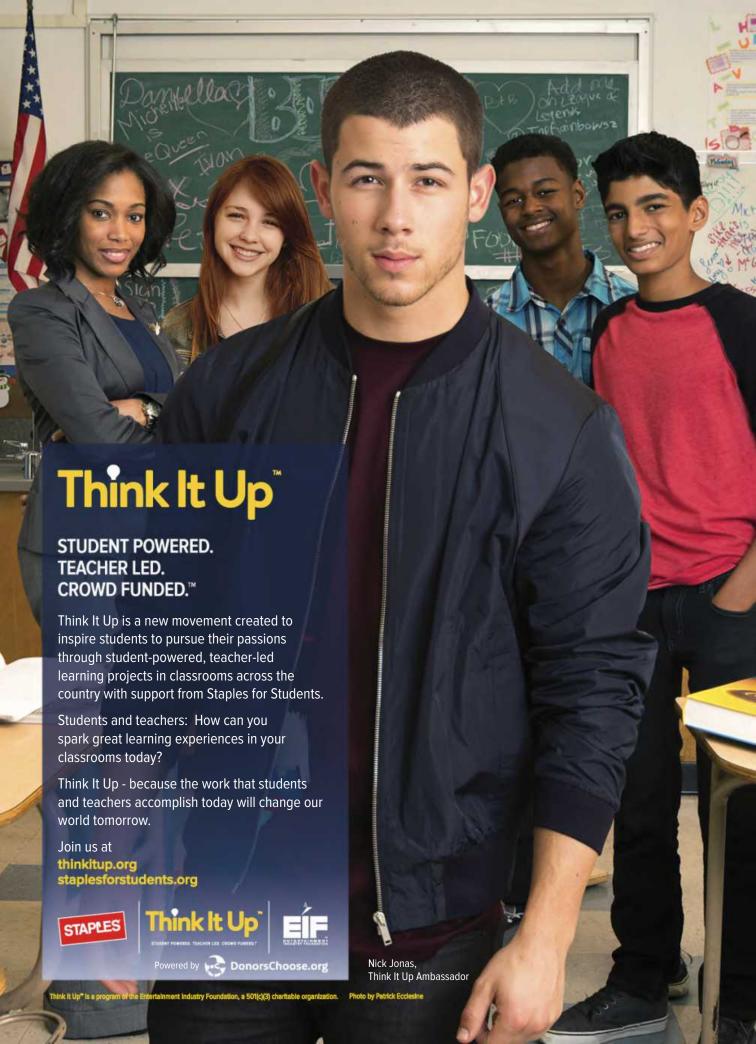
The fact is that, by a strict reading of the Gospels, as Garry Wills never tires of pointing out, Jesus did not found an institutional church. He did not make priests or bishops or cardinals or popes. Men did that, and men fashioned the office you hold in the style of a Renaissance prince.

But of all the popes of my lifetime, you seem to understand best that the only thing left for a pope to do is to teach and, more important, to persuade. Popes didn't use to have to do that. But they do now. Your visit here includes a trip to Philadelphia. You should stop by Independence Hall, where a bunch of men, mostly Protestants and many of them rabidly anti-papist, got together and founded an entire experiment in democracy on the principle that, left to govern themselves, people can be persuaded to act for the general good. Persuasion can be a gift of grace, too. When you talk to the Congress, pray for wisdom, certainly, but also try to draw something from the country you've come to visit. Convince that country, and the world, to do right by themselves, not because of the office you hold, or because of centuries of militarized enforced obedience, but because you are a man of science, a man of reason and intellect, and, because of that, you are worthy of being heard. As the Jesuit in my family would have said,

AMDG,

Pierce

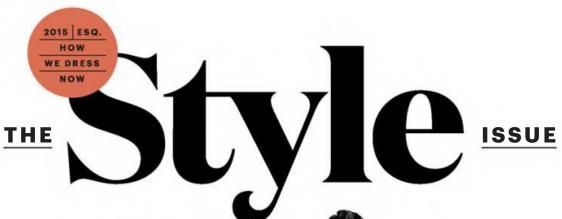




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### POP QUIZ: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS THIS QUOTE FROM?

"Get a big heavy-duty bag and close an edge into a drawer just under the countertop near to where you will be working. The opening will sag down and create a big gaping maw that you can easily chuck things in as you go. (Most home garbage containers are too small for this kind of work.)'

- Robert Durst's soon-to-be-released memoir and how-to book, It Helps to Be Rich
- B Esquire's Eat Like a Man Guide to Feeding a Crowd



Answer: B. That's Bryan Voltaggio, chef and owner of nine restaurants, such as D.C.'s Range, giving cleanup advice on crowd-feeding. For more on cooking for a crew, get the book. Available now.

### Esquire

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# Brionj







# PHOTOGRAPH BY TAGHI NADERZAD

# Undressed

I suffered an irreparable tear in my most useful pair of trousers a week or so ago. They were aging (probably my third summer in them), but they were the perfect shade of blue to pair with the three suit jackets in different shades of blue that I am in the habit of wearing in the warmer months. When a minor tragedy like this befalls us, it occasions not just an alteration in routine but also a reassessment of our relationship with our clothing.

Clothing is fundamental. Every morning, we get up and put something on. We dress differently for nearly every activity we engage in. Only rarely do we throw something on with absolutely no thought. There's always a decision involved, a calculation of what the day holds and how we want to present ourselves to the people we are going to interact with. Inevitably, what we wear represents some facet of who we are. I'm a different person when I am in my (all-black) tennis clothes than I am when I'm in a Zegna jacket, a Hamilton dress shirt, and a tie by Brunello Cucinelli, as I am while I type this. A single item of clothing-like the Cucinelli tie or the black Nike basketball socks I wear for tennis (which all the kids are wearing these days)-can alter your mind-set in subtle but compelling ways. (If you don't believe me, please see "Fifty Men Looking Their Best," on page 159. Men from all over the U.S., of all ages and sizes and professions, let us

in on their thought processes behind getting dressed.)

So although much of this issue is about style, it's also about a fundamental relationship we all participate in. Who are we when we're taken out of our personal comfort zones? Why do we wear what we wear, and how does it affect us? To answer those questions, we sent our fashion director to remote rural Kansas, the geographic center of the lower fortyeight, in little more than his underwear and asked him to get dressed. And we asked Tom Chiarella to don four common uniforms that men wear to work (and fully 20 percent of American men wear a uniform to work each day) to see what effect clothing had both on others perceptions of him and on his own idea of himself.

When Rich Dorment and I sat down initially to talk this issue through, we wanted it to explore one of the most basic things all men do every day, and we wanted it to demonstrate that none

of us are immune to the ramifications of fashion. We wanted to do what Miranda Priestly (played by Meryl Streep in The Devil Wears Prada) did in that speech about the color blue and show how even the most esoteric elements of fashion can trickle down and become part of our lives.

There's so much else in here-Scott Raab's conversation with Keith fking Richards: Anna Peele's hilarious encounter with Miles Teller; Charlie Pierce on his beloved New Orleans ten years after Katrina (also, too, the pope, on page 29); Tom Junod on the pure awesomeness of the NFL; and, of course, Ted Danson—that if clothing is not a thing you will ever think of as your thing, we hope this issue will amuse you even in your nakedness.

DAVID GRANGER **EDITOR IN CHIEF** 

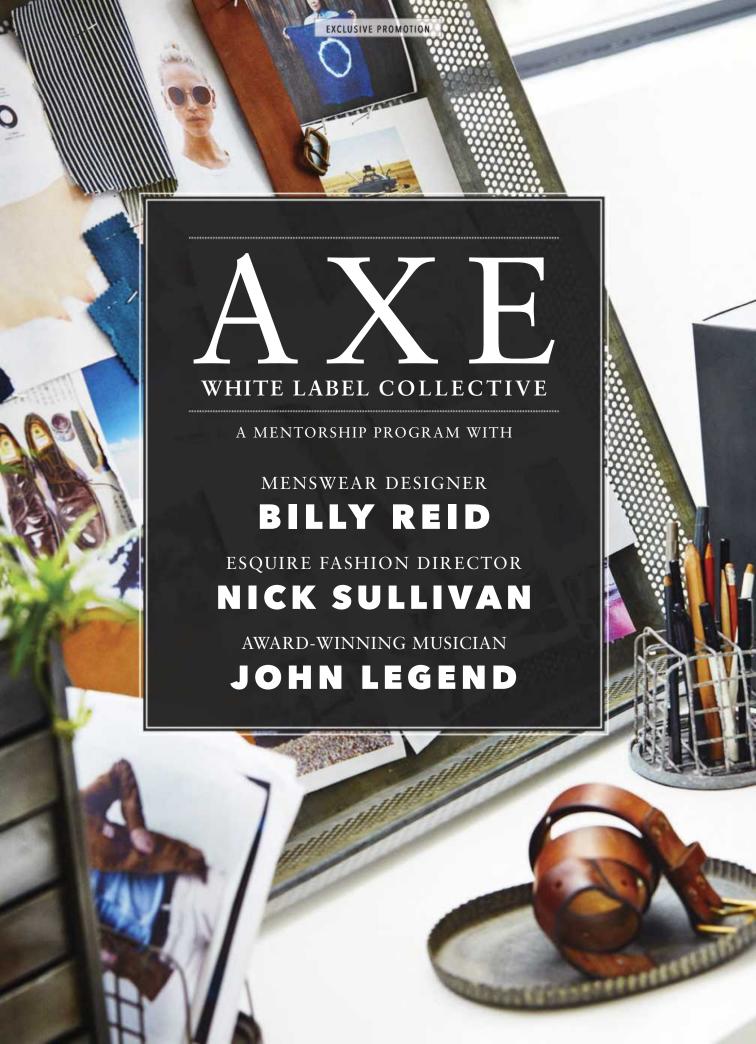
### COMING IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE

ON NEWSSTANDS SEPTEMBER 15

October will be our blockbuster 1,000th issue. It will also mark the launch of the complete digital rchive of Esquire-and the concept of "the eternal now," by which we mean the constant and seamless interaction (via your Shazam app) between the past and the present. This will be fun.

Esquire

DAVID GRANGER, EDITOR IN CHIEF, PETER GRIFFIN, DEPUTY EDITOR: HELINE F, BUBINSTEIN, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, DAVID CURCURITO, DESIGN DIRECTOR, LIAM HINTELMANN, EDITORIAL PROJECTS DIRECTOR, MARK WARREN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR: NICK SULLIVAN, FASHION DIRECTOR, JOHN KENNEY, MANAGING EDITOR, RICHARD DOMBHIT, ROSS MCCAMMON, SENIOR EDITORS; LOSEN OR SERVER, SERVER,





long with raw talent it takes fearless drive, bold tenacity and one big break to make it in men's fashion. That's why **AXE** has partnered with American menswear designer **Billy Reid**, Esquire Fashion Director **Nick Sullivan** and award-winning

### musician John Legend to create the AXE WHITE LABEL COLLECTIVE.

There's no instruction manual to tell you how to become a successful designer, no guide laying out the exact route needed. For many, this is what makes taking the leap to the next career level so exciting - being able to pave your own path. But with this freedom to explore

unknown territories, the danger of making mistakes is also much higher. This is where mentors become an invaluable resource for young designers. The AXE White Label Collective gives those with the confidence and courage the chance to take the leap and become the

next big thing in fashion. After reviewing submissions from across the country, five talented individuals were chosen for unique mentorship sessions with Billy Reid, Nick Sullivan and John Legend. They generously shared their expertise and experiences with these designers to



help guide them in their future endeavors in the menswear world. In addition, each designer's label will be featured at an exclusive event hosted by AXE White Label and Esquire magazine during New York's Fall Fashion Week.





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FROM AXE°



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# Afriyie Poku

### Ghanaian-born designer,

Afriyie Poku, became attracted to the arts from an early age. In 2000, after having migrated to the U.S., he discovered his passion for design during his second year of college, where he was pursuing a degree in electrical engineering. Afriyie's approach was selftaught, learning by way of trial, error, and experimentation. After years of deconstructing and reconstructing garments, he started producing original pieces which enhanced his passion and talent as a designer. Afriyie's independent label, **Oberima Afriyie**, believes all men have a journey to undertake. This journey is shaped and crafted by inspiration, imagination, style, love, passion, determination, discipline and strife. Apart from the opportunity to showcase his designs at a New York Fashion Week event, Afriyie's greatest takeaways from the AXE White Label Collective came from his mentors, with Nick teaching him "to focus on what I'm good at and to make that as best as possible," while Billy advised him to work on his craft. "I learned a lot of different details and ways to achieve what I want to execute as far as

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### **Man at His Best**

# The ESQ&A

**KEITH RICHARDS** talks to **SCOTT RAAB** about his new solo album, *Crosseyed Heart*, stamina, image, the blues, the road, working, and why *Sgt. Pepper* was rubbish



June 30 in the Sanford Boardroom at the Washington Duke Inn, Durham, North Carolina.

SCOTT RAAB: If you smoke, I can smoke, right?
KEITH RICHARDS: Be my guest. If you're gonna smoke anything else, we'll bring in the incense.

SR: I brought a miniature joint, but I'm not thrusting it upon you. I just thought it would be wrong to meet you and not bring a little something.
KR: Well, then, let's get into this

**KR:** Well, then, let's get into this thing and see. We might want to take a break.

**SR:** I don't want to put you in any kind of position.

KR: Absolutely not. I've been in every position possible, and I've always gotten out of it.

**SR:** How are you holding up on the [Stones] tour?

KR: I can handle the show. In the '60s, it was 20 minutes, in and out. Now it's two hours. I don't come off as exhausted as I used to ten years ago, because I've learned more about how to pace a show. I don't think about the physical aspects—I just expect it all to work. I'm blessed physically with stamina. The frame's still holding. I eat the same as I always have. Meat and potatoes, basically, with a nice bit of fish now and again. My wife tries to force more salad down me, but I'd rather take the pill.

**SR:** You still feel the adrenaline onstage?

KR: Yeah. It's probably the only drug left to us, the one that draws us back as much as anything—although there is something about playing with this bunch of guys. Is it habit? Is it just the length of time we've been doing it? But when we start rehearsing, I always find this incredible enthusiasm

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Amotated

## MaHB

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among them all—especially this tour. It's been a great feeling from show one.

SR: Do you ever find yourself missing the road? KR: Once you're at home, there's a sort of dislocation— "Where the hell am I? Why ain't I moving?"—and realizing that you don't have to for a bit. But I've always found with the Stones that it's a sort of collective itch. Everybody'd bust up after a tour and do whatever it is or go wherever. And then there'll be some sort of inner itch after a few months-"Shouldn't we be doing something?" And usually I get the phone call from Mick first, but I'm usually feeling the itch and waiting for the call. You can't force a frontman to do what he don't want to do. We have to stroke him. And keep him happy. You need the spark from Mick really to do it.

**SR:** When was it decided that you'd stand where you stand onstage? Was that ever a conscious decision?

KR: You know, I've always been on Mick's left side, from the earliest club gigs I can remember. I have no idea why. Sometimes I wander over to Ronnie's side and try it out, but it always feels a bit weird, you know?

SR: I turned 12 in 1964. The Stones turned me on to a lot of American music I'd never heard before. Muddy Waters. Howlin' Wolf. Robert Johnson. KR: Funny—I was having a conversation with Buddy Guy just a few days ago where he was very generously saying, "Thank God for you guys, because you really did save the blues in America. You brought it all back to life." It was a great



Clockwise from top: In London in 1967, on stage in 1981, with the Stones in 1963.

thing, because when we were just starting out in London, the idea was to bring Chicago blues to London. We were a bit idealistic at the time—you know what kids are like—but no matter how bizarre it might sound, as a living or as an aim, that was it. We kind of did that in England, and then suddenly we found within a

year or two that it was translating over to America—taking coal to Newcastle.

**SR:** Not if you're a white kid in the suburbs.

KR: That's what we realized when we got here, that white kids only listened to that end of the dial, and up the other end was all of this incredible stuff.

SR: Watching footage of the band from the mid-'60s reminded me of how primal and sexual the band's appeal was from the beginning. The screaming, the rioting—did you ever wonder where all that came from?

KR: When you're on the receiving end of it, it's quite obvious it's primal and sexual and beyond any reason. They certainly didn't come for the music.

**SR:** You couldn't hear the music.

KR: No. Especially in those days—there were no PAs. And 3,000 screaming chicks could just wail you out of the whole place. Just looking at the crowd, you could see them dragging the chicks out, sweating, screaming, convulsing. Astonishing, even at that age. At



the same time, a whole roomful of chicks yelling at you is not so shabby, either. Because the year before, nobody would look at you. But they talk about us-the Beatles, those chicks wore those guys out. They stopped touring in 1966—they were done already. They were ready to go to India and shit. **SR:** I've been thinking about Rubber Soul, Revolver, Sgt. Pepper, and The White Album and listening to Beggars Banquet, Let It Bleed, Sticky Fingers, and Exile on Main St. Over the past 20 years, I've listened to that Stones stuff far more often.

KR: No, I understand—the Beatles sounded great when they were the Reatles, But there's not a lot of roots in that music. I think they got carried away. Why not? If you're the Beatles in the '60s, you just get carried away—you forget what it is you wanted to do. You're starting to do Sgt. Pepper. Some people think it's a genius album, but I think it's a mishmash of rubbish, kind of like Satanic Majesties—"Oh, if you can make a load of shit, so can we." **SR:** You've put some elemental music on the new solo album [Crosseyed Heart]. "Goodnight Irene."

KR: The old Leadbelly song, yeah

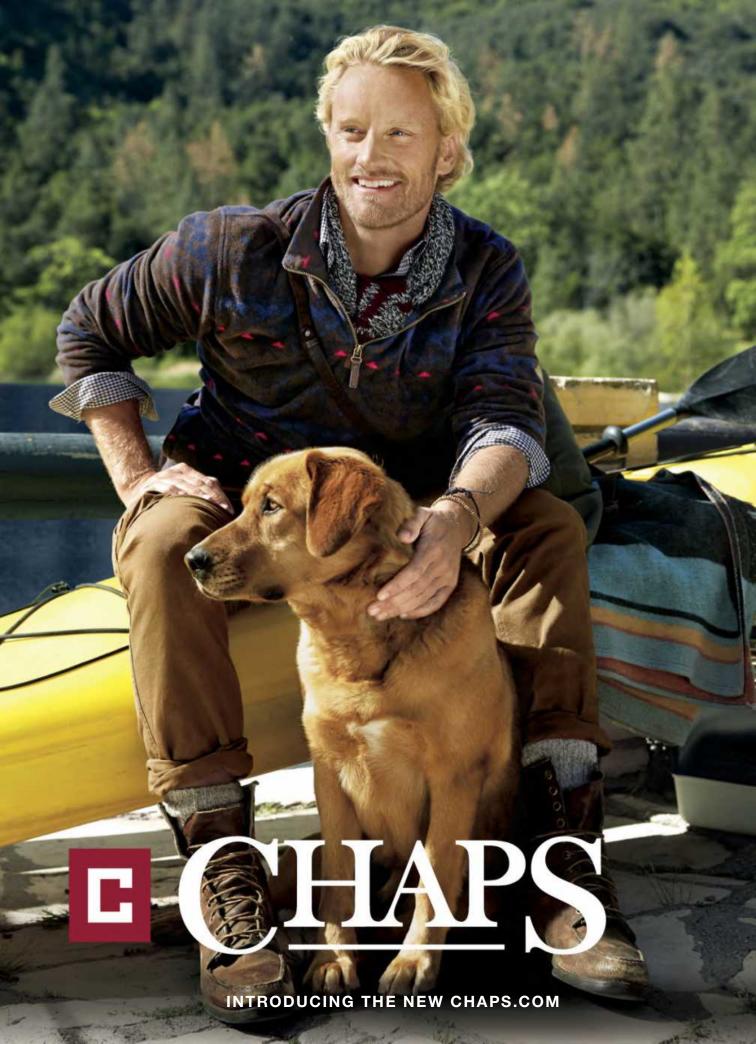
**SR:** The purity of sound and voice is remarkable. Everything but the blues is stripped away. **KR:** Thank you.

**SR:** You've said that the power of the blues was a mind-blower when you were a kid, and it hasn't changed.

KR: No. I recognize power when I see it. And there's something incredibly powerful about the blues—the raw blues. But then, there isn't a piece of popular music probably that you've heard that hasn't in some weird way been influenced by the blues. Even the most inane jingle or rap song—it's all influenced by the blues. I think it's probably the original musical form

CONTINUED







#### CONTINUED

in the world, when it comes

SR: I just read about [former Rolling Stones bass player] Bill Wyman getting upset about a plaque at Dartford station honoring you and Mick.

KR: Yeah. I actually don't know exactly what it said, but Mick just the other day came up to me and says, "Do you believe this shit, man? Bill Wyman is complaining about the plaque at Dartford station." I said, "A plaque? I thought we had a statue."

**SR:** He was pissed off because it said you and Mick "formed" the Rolling Stones.

KR: I know he took umbrage with that, but I can't understand why. Bill wasn't there when the band was formed. Ian Stewart formed the band—we gravitated around him. Bill was a quirky, funny old fucker, but why he should make some kind of public 'do about it.... I think Mick sent a note sayingbecause Bill comes from a town called Penge—"Bill, if a plaque went up in Penge station that said you were the founding member of the Rolling Stones, do you think we'd complain?" But Bill-oh, we love him dearly, and he was a hell of a bass player. We didn't tell him to leave.

SR: Not everyone wants to dwell on Mount Olympus. KR: It's a bit crowded up there. Lots of people trying to get



With Mick Jagger on the 2015 North American "Zip Code" tour.

up. You can go bye-bye really easy in this business and think you're something special or divine or semidivine or something. I've seen some guys who snap out of it, or they just go through a phase. But others actually believe that if you're on TV and magazines are fawning over you, you're actually special. They usually find out the hard way that they ain't. SR: You've played with everyone from George Jones to Tom Waits. Is there anyone you haven't played with that you'd like to?

KR: There's probably a few guys out there...actually, I can't think of any off the top of my head. I mean, all of the cats I've always wanted to play with I've met and eventually worked with. I love Tom dearly—he's a true American eccentric, and we need more of them, you know. Brilliant guy, brilliant musician. I always had that hankering to do "Irene"-I think maybe Tom doing "Shenandoah" a few years ago, the great American folk song, and being involved in that—suddenly I've got a 12-string in my hand and it's time for "Irene." I've had the opportunity with Merle Haggard. All of these guys that I used to listen to—the amazing thing is that even at my age, I'm living in a place where I know all of my heroes, warts and all, and still love 'em. Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis-man, if that is not Mr. Rock 'n' Roll, I don't know who is. Little Richard. I love those cats.

SR: It's strange that after all these years, your legend almost has an entirely separate existence from your music. KR: I know. It's the bizarre thing about this—I'm probably more well-known because of my image rather than the music. I got used to it—he's like a ball and chain you drag around and it's some guy you maybe were 25 years ago. But he's always there.

SR: Do you know that José Feliciano lives in the same town as you in Connecticut? KR: I do know that, but I've never met him. We've never crossed paths, even though Weston is a very small town there's a gas station and a market.

SR: So you're actually the second-best guitarist in Weston, Connecticut. KR: I'd go for that. He's a far better guitar player than me. SR: I don't think so. KR: No-I mean technically, classically. I ain't trained that way. I force the thing to do as it's told.

**SR:** I don't know much beyond the sounds I hear.

KR: Thank God, nor do I. The technical aspects—my horror is doing interviews with Guitar Magazine or something. I've got my favorite axes that I do know quite a bit about, but when they start to go, "Is that the Gibson S3?"—I don't fucking know. It works all right for me.

SR: Have you had a boss since you got expelled from school? KR: No. You're talking to somebody, like Mick, who has never, ever said "Yes, sir" to anybody or obeyed instructions that we didn't want to. I've said yes to many people only because I respect them. But no, I've never had a boss. Even my bankers and my lawyers have all gone through the mill. Even royalty go through it—they're told what to do. I've lived a totally free life. They gave me wings.

SR: A scary, scary thing. KR: It is, because there's no guidelines.

SR: No boundaries whatsoever. KR: Icarus.

SR: You've often said that you'd willingly pay the toll again. And I believe you.

KR: Yeah, it's been worth the price. To become a musician, that was the dream-just to get into a band. You didn't care if you were stuck in the back strumming away. You know, I would have gladly done that. I wouldn't have minded being a sideman, but things turned out another way. Maybe it was the haircut or something. 19

### THE ESQUIRE DOSSIER

### KEITH RICHARDS

Nickname: Keef Which evolved from: Family nickname "Cousin Beef Date of birth: December 18, 1943 Which makes him: 71 Though he would argue: That he's "been conscious for at least three lifetimes. Based on the logic that: "For many years [he] slept, on average. twice a week." A claim all the more impressive when you consider: He says he wrote the "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" guitar riff in his sleep. Hometown: Dartford, England Where he: Attended primary school with Mick Jagger.

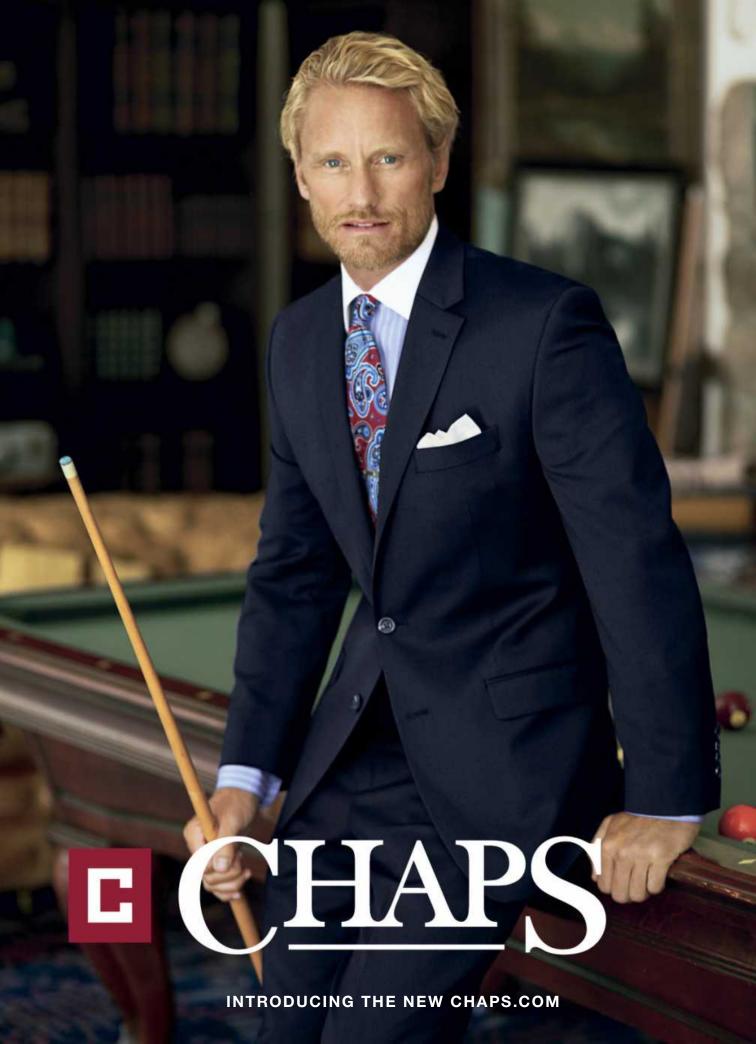
**Primary occupation:** Guitarist and cosongwriter for the Rolling Stones. Lesser-known gigs: Choirboy; children's-book author; solo musician. Speaking of...: Richards will release a new solo album. Crosseved Heart. September 18. The making of which: You'll be able to watch in an original Netflix documentary this fall. Ranking on Rolling Stone's 100 Greatest Guitarists list: No. 4 Instrument of choice: A 1950s Fender Telecaster named "Micawber." Wife: Patti Hansen Whose courtship

ing up at her parents' house with a bottle of liquor and smashing his quitar on the dining-room table. Patti's parents, according to Patti: "Were terrified, so worried about me." Patti's parents. according to Keith: "Weren't offended. A little startled, maybe... Meanwhile, Keith was: "Over the moon and peeing [his] pants." . Children: Alexandra, 29, and Theodora, 30 (with Hansen), and Dandelion Angela, 43, and Marlon, 46 (with Anita Pallenberg).

**Proportion of whom** 

involved: Keith show-

are models: Half Number of times Scott Raab was addressed by name in this interview: 7ero Number of times Raab was addressed as "man": Seven Other terms of endearment given to Richards's interviewers: "Mate," "darling," "honey." Causes of near death: Hitler (bombing of London, 1944); microphone (onstage electrocution, 1965); bed (caught on fire, 1971); a Fijian tree (bumped head and subsequent cerebral hematoma, 2006). Societal benefit of his hardiness: "I can't retire until I croak."







# **Middlebrow**

Jonathan Franzen fights what he's become By RICHARD DORMENT

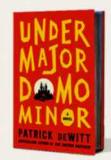
It probably started when he published Freedom and the cover of Time branded him "Great American Novelist" without the courtesy of a clarifying The or A. And it is rich, considering how valiantly he fought the Oprah imprimatur on The Corrections in the name of... what, exactly? Yet here he is in 2015, Jonathan Franzen, our nation's most middlebrow writer, read dutifully by the righteous Starbucks masses and begrudgingly respected by serious minds alike. The man himself, in a talk at Harvard in 2008, once described the dichotomy between those who read because it's "the right thing to do" and those motivated by headier impulses, and to the latter group, the ones nose deep in whatever experimental Hungarian writer The New York Review of Books is pushing this week, he has lately become the Coldplay of American letters: talented, for sure, but so damn poppy.

Franzen is nothing if not self-aware, and with his sly new novel, Purity (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$28), he seems to have set his mind to undermining any accusations of middlebrowdom. He focuses on three main characters with uncertain relationships to one another: a young California woman named Pip with no direction in life and a migraine of a mother; a middle-aged journalist named Tom Aberant, who runs a nonprofit investigative Web site out of Denver; and, most important, an Assange-like truth teller named Andreas Wolf, who rose from the ashes of East Germany to create the Sunlight Project, a WikiLeaks manqué based in Bolivia that aims to disinfect "social injustice and toxic secrets." There is graphic sex and a grisly murder and all manner of adult situations, yet to describe what one character does or means to another-or to explain how the shifting points of view and even an odd lapse into first-person narration come together—would only spoil the revelations that Franzen has in store for the patient reader. (Good luck to the bookclub organizer trying to summarize this one.) He experiments with form, he frustrates with uneven pacing, and though he stalls and digresses at times, his approach mostly works. Franzen seems intent on messing with us, and it's hard to say it's not fun discovering just how everything and everyone connects.

In that, it's a true novel of the 21st century. Just as with The Corrections and Freedom, where Franzen told his readers, right there on the covers, what the books were really about, Purity explores the consequences of living in a time and place in which many people value purity—spiritual, intellectual, political, emotional-above all else. The surveillance-industry complex, the Occupy movement, the social-media revolution, the tyranny and genuinely terrifying power of the Internet, the inexhaustible and exhausting sense of outrage that passes for enlightenment: Franzen tears into the world as it's become, all while keeping a close eye on the daily acts of compromise and surrender that all but the fanatical must endure to get by.

There is also the smaller matter of artistic purity, which Franzen addresses in a clever riff delivered by a minor character, a writer of "bigbooks" (because "bigness was essential"), commenting on literary culture today: "So many Jonathans. A plague of literary Jonathans. If you read only the New York Times Book Review, you'd think it was the most common male name in

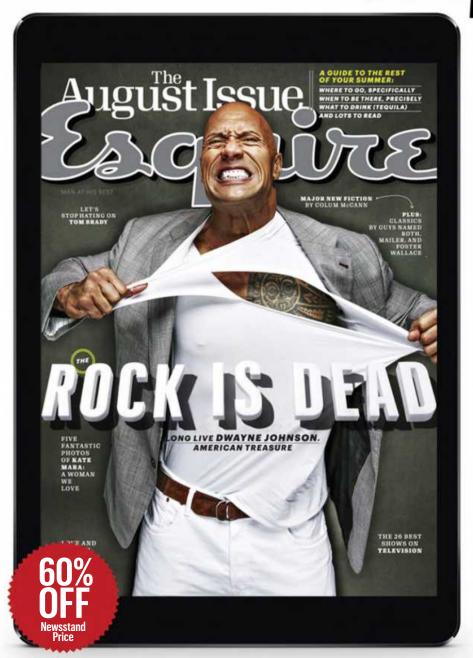
CONTINUED



### **Undermajordomo Minor, by Patrick deWitt**

Inspired by those European fairy tales designed to scare the crap out of children, and every bit as dark and peculiar, Patrick deWitt's third novel (Ecco, \$27) is populated with brutish giants, agreeable thieves, bold, insatiable maidens, and a local nobility with a taste for perverse parlor games (what they do with a peach tart is particularly imaginative). In his previous novel, The Sisters Brothers, deWitt discovered brutal humanity and coal-black humor behind the facade of a recognizable genre, and now he's done it again. Undermajordomo Minor bursts with exchanges begging to be read aloud in the village square. -MIKE HARVKEY

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#### CONTINUED

America. Synonymous with talent, greatness. Ambition, vitality." This particular Jonathan knows exactly what we've come to expect from him, yet with Purity, imperfect and impolite but, yes, ambitious and vital, he proves us all wrong.



### Above the Waterfall **By Ron Rash**

Ron Rash is the kind of writer you want to call a Pulitzer-prize winner because it's a foregone conclusion. His poems and short

stories and novels-Serena, my favorite among them-have established him as the bard of Appalachia, but make no mistake: He's a national treasure, albeit one who's still too unknown.

His new book, Above the Waterfall (Ecco, \$27), is a lushly written page-turner set in rural North Carolina. The methtroubled, poverty-stricken area feels like a close cousin to Daniel Woodrell's Ozarks, where everybody knows everybody's blood ties and quarrels go seven generations back.

The sheriff, Les, is ready to retire. He's not old, he's exhausted. He busts into a meth house and goes still, and for one long minute stares into the black bore of the pistol aimed at him before it lowers. He busts into another and discovers a baby sleeping in an open microwave. He's building a cabin and just wants to kick back on the wraparound porch and enjoy the view. But of course he's got one last job.

There is money in the area. Some of it comes from the marijuana farmers. And some of it comes from a local resort famous for its trout stream. Someone has dumped kerosene into it, poisoning the fish, and it appears a cantankerous old man whose property neighbors the resort is to blame. He has a history of trespassing and assault.

Rash splits the narrative, following both the plainspoken sheriff and the park ranger he loves, Becky, as they work through the crime. She's haunted by her past, and in her passages, you'll see Rash's poetic sensibility cranked up to high volume.

This is true of so many in town. The land defines them, their families define them, a farm accident or a school shooting or a drunk father or a painful divorce defines them, and they're struggling to break free of that history and author a different future. Lucky for us, Rash does it for them. -BENJAMIN PERCY



# **USELESS SKILL OF THE MONTH:**

KNOWLEDGE TO KEEP IN YOUR BACK POCKET, WITH LONG DIVISION AND SAILING KNOTS

### **Interview by JULIA BLACK**

American Ninja Warrior (Tuesdays at 8:00 P.M. on the Esquire Network) features a series of extremely difficult obstacles you are unlikely to encounter in life. One of these is the Salmon Ladder, a structure with one movable rung that the Ninja Warrior carries with him (or her) as he ascends—like a pull-up where you bring the bar with you. Should you find yourself in the unfortunate position of being a "salmon" (so named because the climber is "swimming upstream"), personal trainer and season 7 competitor **JJ Woods** has you covered:

- > You're exploding your body up, extending your arms so that you can reach the next rung, and carrying your body weight up with your knees. In between rungs, you reach a moment of zero gravity where your body is almost weightless-I practice by doing explosive clapping pull-ups to simulate the motion.
- > Don't aim for the next pegs. Aim for the base of the ones on top of that, to give yourself a few inches of room just in case.

- > It looks like you're doing the worm, especially when you get that rhythm going. And yes, I can do the worm on the Salmon Ladder and on the floor.
- > There's a much harder way to do it, which I've successfully done only once. Instead of hanging from the ladder, you do a muscle-up, where you get your body on top of the Salmon Ladder, and from there you hit the bar with your hips and swing it over your head to try to catch the next rung. There's really no room for error.
- > I've had people walk into my gym who look like they were sculpted from marble, but they have no air awareness. Then I've had other guys come in who may not be much to look at, but they understand the mechanics of the body. So sure, there may be hope for you.
- > Man. if the Salmon Ladder takes me out this season, I'm hiding under a rock.





### NO. I'M FROM THE OTHER THING

AN INTRODUCTION TO FILMMAKER JOE SWANBERG, BY FILMMAKER JOE SWANBERG

- > Uh, I'm not sure where you know me from. If you're a regular person and not, like, a cinephile, maybe you saw me get stabbed to death with screwdrivers in the horror movie You're Next. > I've been confused with the auv from Dexter before. Sometimes I get "Are you Chris from Jackass? > I'm a filmmaker. The one
- you're most likely to know is probably Drinking Buddies it's on Netflix. It's these two people who work in a craft brewery in Chicago, and they're kind of in love with each other, but they're both in these other relationships. Olivia Wilde and Anna Kendrick are in it.
- > Crazy, right? That they would, like, fly to Chicago and improvise a half-

- million-dollar movie? > I'm just a facilitator. I'm an
- enabler with a camera. > The new movie is Digging for Fire. It's about a married couple, my favorite subject. I wrote it with Jake Johnson from New Girl-he stars in it with Rosemarie DeWitt. We decided to make it after he found a bone and a gun in his yard, and he and his friends kind of act obsessed with figuring out what they were.
- > Mike Birbiglia and Anna are in it.... There's Sam Rockwell, Brie Larson, Sam Elliott, Chris Messina, my four-year-old son, Jude. Orlando Bloom, who's a great actor. You should see it. It's out August 21.
- > Anyway, nice meeting you, man.



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# Meet the Crumblers

The new aristocracy doesn't have material wealth. Thank God for clout and orthodontia.

**By STEPHEN MARCHE** 

The way you spot them is their teeth. Even when their clothes are cheap, their apartments small, their manners lousy, and their careers negligible, they bear the evidence of well-managed dentistry—the surest sign of a financially stable and nurturing upbringing. Teeth are the way you spot kids who came from money but don't have any money, the members of the educated elite who are sliding downward with the general decline of the middle class in America, the ones who live the statistic that children will no longer be as well-off as their parents were. They face the crumbling of the old orders and arrangements, with their easy prosperity and opportunities. Call them the crumblers.

This month, the two greatest chroniclers of the crumblers will add to their cultural currency. In Jonathan Franzen's *Purity* (see page 56), a young woman living with Oakland anarchists and a six-figure student debt begins an internship at an all-powerful organization that traffics in the world's secrets. And Noah Baumbach will release *Mistress America*, whose protagonist is an interior decorator/aerobics instructor/restaurateur who has to beg an old friend for money to keep her dreams alive. These two are the laureates of the declining upper middle class—intertwined artists. Baumbach was even slated to make the HBO version of Franzen's novel *The Corrections* before it fell apart.

"Once in every half-century, at longest," Hawthorne wrote, "a family should be merged into the great, obscure mass of humanity, and forget all about its ancestors." This merging is well under way for many families. Even after the economic recovery, the number of people working part-time involuntarily is more than 50

### MaHB SOCIETY

percent higher than in 2007. The great crunch has left that most precious and self-defining of American phenomena—meaningfully wealth-creating, self-advancing, secure middle-class employment—missing in action. What is left is not just an underclass that is out of the game but also a residuum of the upper middle class that has been caught without a chair after the music stopped.

In Franzen's novels and Baumbach's films, the characters are distinct, "well-realized" in the way that's taught in film and creative-writing programs, but the condition they describe is always the same: They have Ivy League educations (or consciously not Ivy League educations); they live in New York (or consciously not in New York); they have exclusive taste in music, books, and films and judge themselves and others, almost exclusively, by their consumption of cultural products. They love expensive reprints of antique comic books. They wear ragged T-shirts from concerts they attended 20 years earlier, when rock 'n' roll was still important. Their politics are ardently, if lazily, left-wing. They are obsessed with the distinction between analog and digital because they are analog and the rise of digital is identical with their own blossoming

irrelevance. And they obsess over youth and money. Their fundamental spiritual condition, in all aspects of their lives, is anxiety.

One reason the crumblers occupy such an outsize place in American culture—far greater than they would seem to deserve—is that almost everyone in the culture industries is a crumbler, practically by definition. American culture is crammed with educated people who are not making any money but have paid an exorbitant fee for entry. Writing and movies and music are the preserve of children whose folks can contribute the bulk of that all-important first Kickstarter or the tuition to the UCLA sculpture program. The culture of the crumblers is, in a sense, the result of a practical decision: writers writing what they know.

There is a more essential reason that the crumblers make such good characters, though. They are both inside and outside the ruling class; theirs is a privileged vantage point from which to oversee the mechanisms of the world, beyond the purview of their own little lives. Unfortunately, their utter determination by inevitable economic factors makes the spiritual life of the crumblers equally inevitable. For the characters of Franzen and Baumbach, the anxiety, the ferocious need to keep their eyes fixed on themselves and their precise positioning in the social order, leads to an allencompassing narcissism. That sense of inwardness that makes Baumbach films and Franzen novels so totally of the moment makes them unbearably claustrophobic, as our moment can be.

All of their education has given the crumblers the ability to descant on their own deformity. They do not have the dignity of the Lost Generation. They do not have the boldness of the Beat Generation. They have only the intelligence to know just how screwed they are. That and straight teeth.

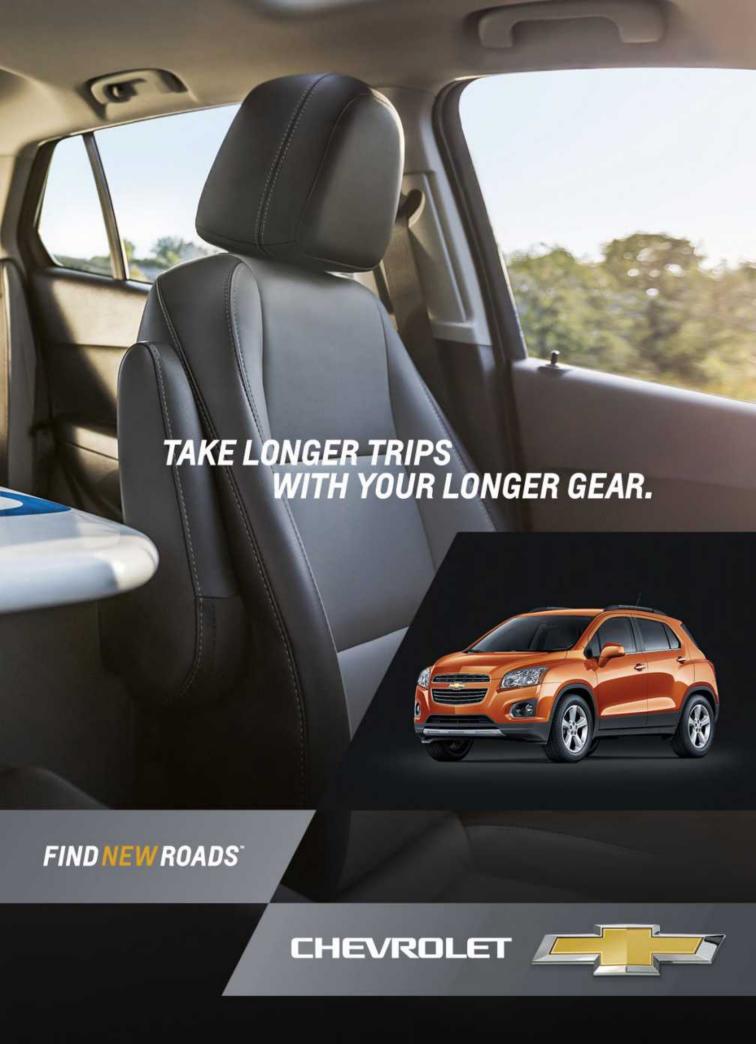


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### **THE 2016 CHEVROLET TRAX**





Walter Blunt isn't here to play beer pong with Megan Fox.

# **The Host Whisperer**

Amid great turnover on talk shows, we reminisced with veteran guest **Patrick Stewart** about his most memorable appearances. Oh: He also plays fictional TV host
Walter Blunt\* on the sitcom *Blunt Talk* (premiering August 22 at 9:00 P.M. on Starz)

By NATE HOPPER

### THE ARSENIO HALL SHOW, 1989

With talk shows, you go on and the interviewer, who's done this a thousand times, has a first question already written. It's stiff and awkward. But I developed an approach to keep it spontaneous: I would not let him have a chance to ask that first question. So I went on Arsenio and I said I'd always loved his first name. I thought it was beautiful. But then-I was so ignorant, so naive-I asked him where Hall came from. I got so much criticism the next day for embarrassing Arsenio by asking him questions about his slave name. God knows what it would have been like now. Facebook, Twitter-they would have me hanging from my thumbs. But I had just come to work in America. I had no idea what a slave name was. And so, nine months later, I went on the show again and apologized. He said, "What are you talking about?" We had a real, honest conversation about it. It was no longer host and British actor promoting his show.

### LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN, 1991

I'd just done a play in which there was a lot of dancing. So Letterman said, "Well, how does it work? Do you just do 1-2-3?" And I stood up and said, "You really want to know? Come on. We'll have the lesson right here." He wouldn't leave his seat. I looked like a jerk. I found him to be the most immovable person. I think on the whole, I enjoyed sessions with Jay more.

### THE DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART. 1998

My first impression of Jon Stewart was a very good one. He's interested in having conversations. He didn't have a list of jokes written on a board that somebody's holding up over your shoulder. Nothing is more discouraging than the person you're talking to looking past you at the next gag. I found that commonplace early, but less with Stewart, Colbert, and Conan. Actu-

ally, I haven't seen a cue card for a long time. Maybe they're no longer fashionable.

## THE LATE LATE SHOW WITH JAMES CORDEN, upcoming

In 2010, I was presenting a *Glamour* Women of the Year award. James, who was hosting the ceremony, had said a couple things to an actress during the show that I thought were kind of out of line. I had, out of boredom, started drinking too much champagne and decided to have a go at him. I drew attention to his shirt hanging out of his trousers and his belly sticking out. It was very funny for a couple minutes. But then came the first boos from the audience. And they grew. And James was encouraging it. We've talked since—we're friends. But I'd like to go on his show and talk about it. Boy, that was a hard lesson to learn.

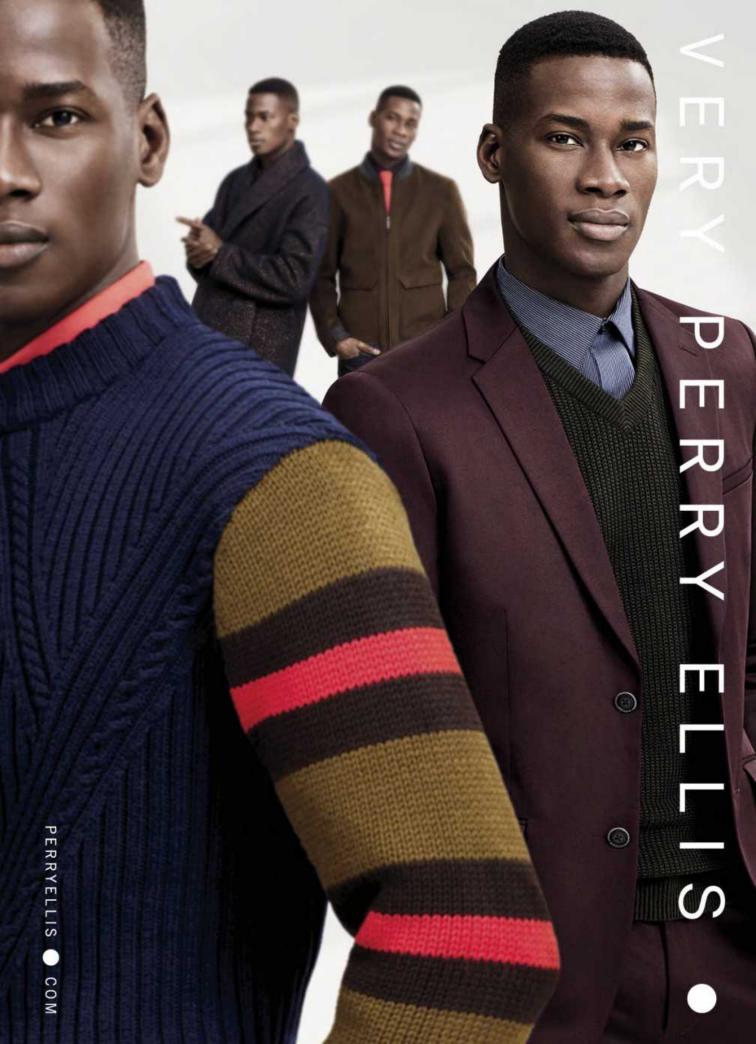
\*Any resemblance to actual hosts, living or dead, is purely coincidental.



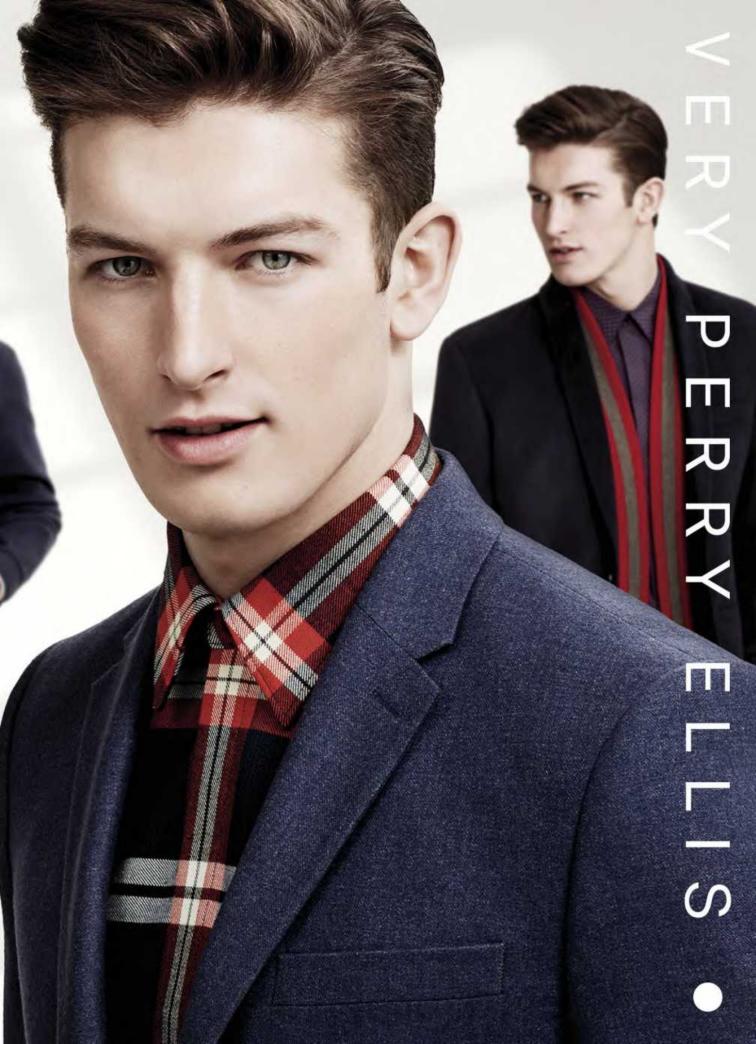
### A LATE-NIGHT PRAYER

**Now that heavenly hosts** Jay Leno and David Letterman and Jon Stewart have passed on, let us pray for a new era in Late Night. Let us pray that networks forget that Leno had better numbers than Letterman, and that they resist the urge to do simpering mainstream bullshit and try inspired weirdness instead. Let the suits find courage in their hearts. Let Jimmy Kimmel stay awake on air despite his narcolepsy. Let Jimmy Fallon not laugh at his own jokes quite so uproariously. Let Stephen Colbert not burn out and Trevor Noah stay off Twitter. Let James Corden catch on, even though he's British. And let Conan O'Brien return to the fold of hosts who have shows on real stations. Above all, let us pray that the networks find somebody who is not a straight man to host a late-night talk show, because even though there's nothing wrong with straight men, this is getting ridiculous. Let us pray that everybody stays funny. Let us pray that we laugh more than we have laughed. Amen.

-STEPHEN MARCHE

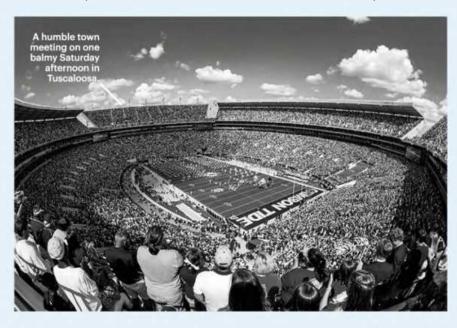






# THE ESQUIRE MANUAL No. 72: Stadiums

This month, heckling instructions, mob-mentality neuroscience, trough fauna, and keeping your hands clean (of both fisticuffs and cheeselike substances)



We are our most barefaced in a pack, howling at the Jumbotron, all caught up in the bloodswirling illusion of the Opposition, those with the same knowledge base, the same event to behold, but the wrong belief system: All hail the one true shade of polyester.

Woo! Make some noise! Just not about anyone's sister. (Mothers are fine.) No worthy heckle contains a curse. Nor the word scoreboard. Everyone's mouth has been washed out with beer, so know whom you're dealing with—and bless 'em. For it is the Opposition who makes this fun. Bless them by showering the miscreants with sacrilege, not mustard. Bless them by respecting the guy who puts his own surname on his jersey—he loves the game the most. Fear the guy with DADDY etched across his back and no children in sight. He could be a lawyer. There is no way to know.

Such is the beauty of the stadium: Between the enthrallment and the cargo shorts, we all become indistinguishable, a community again and in awe.

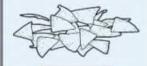
Stand for the anthem, for the peaking excitement, for the people shuffling past you down the row. Even when you pull back your knees, they are still hurdles. These people are not the athletes. Stand out of the sight line of the kid behind you, unless there's a ball flying faceward. Then catch it and bequeath it to the child; he still has hope of reaching the field someday. Do not stand for the Wave (except in the Oakland Athletics ballpark, where the first official Wave took place).

Otherwise, this is a place for sitting. And reminiscing. And forgetting. On weekday nights and weekend days from the hours of two to four or six or eight...



"If a back-and-forth starts off confrontational, it's going to escalate," says David Rinetti, vice-president of stadium operations for the Oakland Athletics. So be courteous. Tone included. If things worsen, whip out a "Hey, there are kids here." But it's hard to reason with a drunk. Still escalating? Call over a guard. Leave the feats of strength to those in uniform.





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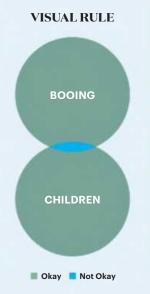
### THE ESQUIRE MANUAL

#### REGARDING MOB MENTALITY

The game is zero-sum. There is your teamthe us-and a rival teamthe *them*—and only one wins. Swept up in the fervor, surrounded by your clan, and challenged by helmet-wearing meatballs and their barbaric groupies, you may lose yourself.

Or, as Mina Cikara, director of the Intergroup Neuroscience Lab at Harvard, explains, the parts of your prefrontal cortex responsible for your moral compass get inhibited, making you less able to reflect on how you are right now in a mob of red shirts rushing at blue shirts. "You only have so much cognitive capacity, and when you're distracted by what's going on around you, it gets harder to engage in self-referential thought."

If this happens, stop yourself, question your actions, and dissuade your clan. We listen to fellow members. (Guards-keepers of the peace—become a them, too.) Let dignity define us. We've evolved to want to fit in. With the bad, but also with the good.



# THE TROUGH

A threat assessment

IDEAL \* **NOT IDEAL** IDEAL

[1] Avoid this man. Foam fingers struggle to zip down flies. When this is realized, the trough provides no easy place for storage. Most will hold betwixt arm and torso. Some between knees. [2] Judge your safety by the strength of his calves

(he will wear shorts) and the steadiness of his kid. Strong calves and steady kid? Proceed.

[3] Never trust the man who stands directly over the drain, in the center of the rapids.\*

[4] Go forth. Unlike most locations, this is a place where men wearing sandals are trustworthy. They will be the most careful.

[5] Wait for this man to leave. He has taken the outer/high ground, farthest from the drain, the most valuable position of all.

\*Most tips included herein may also be applied to the urinal row. Just not this one.



# Three Alternative Heckles

Using originality to rattle millionaire athletes. And officials.

### > The History Lesson

Format: [Surname/Sir]! I haven't seen a [mistake] that bad since [historical reference learned in high school]! Example: Sir! I haven't seen a call that bad since Alexander Graham Bell said, "Mr. Watson, come here! I want to see you!"

> The Unassuming Query

Format: Hey, [surname]! [Icebreaker question]? [Clarification]. I'm genuinely curious! Example: Hey, Watt! What's

your desert-island book list? Pick five. I'm genuinely curious!

#### > The Unexpected Praise

Format: Hey, [surname]! Your [most groomed body part] [praise] today! It's like [said part of '90s-yet-still-relevant actress] made love with [ditto current cultural figure]! [Praise]! Example: Hey, Holt! Your hair looks splendid today! It's like Claire Danes's locks made love with the mane of American Pharoah! Well done!

# **INFORMED EXIT** STRATEGY

- Plan. Read the transportation directions, stadium maps, and barrage of pregame messages. Stadiumoperations teams study traffic flow. Trust them.
- Avoid restrooms, where lines bottleneck traffic.
- Utilize back entrances. People often leave the way they came in, so exit the way few entered.
- Relight the grill. Wait out the traffic.

Additional consultants: George Cunningham, COO of the Rose Bowl; Tim Cahill, national director of design for HNTB Corporation and lead designer of Levi's Stadium; Tony Valerio, retired security guard for more than 3,500 Philadelphia Phillies games.





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# Funny\*Joke from a Beautiful Woman

AS TOLD BY MIA MAESTRO

A MAN CAME HOME ONE DAY to find a note his wife had left on the refrigerator that said: "It's not working. I can't take it anymore. Gone to stay with my sister."

He opened the fridge, the light came on, and the beer was cold. He scratched his head and said, "What the hell is she talking about?"





# Stunning new coupe or powerful SUV? Yes.

**Introducing the Mercedes-Benz GLE Coupe.** The 2016 GLE Coupe combines the pure style and driving thrills of a legendary Mercedes-Benz coupe with the impressive power and athleticism you've come to expect from a Mercedes-Benz SUV. It's a dual threat that is a very singular achievement. The all-new 2016 GLE Coupe. MBUSA.com/GLECoupe

# Mercedes-Benz

The best or nothing.





# Sex with Stacey Woods

My wife only used to be able to orgasm from missionary, and now she only can when she's on top. Did something change

I haven't been down there in a while, but there've been no reports of suspicious activity-no unauthorized comings and goings or anything. If it'll make you feel better, I'll put a man on it.

Of the six expert-offered reasons for your wife's sudden erotic relocation, all are disturbing and one is also disheartening. It seems that age, excess weight, childbirth, or any combination thereof-I don't know what you guys get up to over there—can change the shape of the vagina and its environs. "Things have had a lot of pressure on them and have been kind of stretched out," says Dr. Shireen Madani Sims of the University of Florida College of Medicine. "A little bit of the bladder can hang down into the vagina,

the uterus sits down lower in the vagina, the position of the clitoris can change slightly." I'll let vou take a minute with that before I relay that sex therapist Vanessa Marin thinks it's possible your wife had never had an orgasm until she was on top and has merely been lying to you for ages. "She might have been faking it in the beginning and used the excuse that she needs to be on top as a way to avoid having to be honest." But I don't think your wife's an out-

> READER QUESTIONS WE WON'T BE **ANSWERING THIS** MONTH

How do I experience sexual ecstasy with a topnotch lady if Í don't want to do too much work?

Do all women come? Because I haven't found one I can't make come.

Please, sir, suggest some special foods through which I can regain the power I've lost during intercourse.

right liar, because I'm an outright liar and she's never at the meetings. Whatever the cause or causes—which, says Kate Thomas, clinical sexologist at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, can also include "lack of arousal" and "lack of focus"-I urge you to rein in this behavior before it gets worse. First she can come only on the bottom, then on top, then on vachts, then with hockey players. We all know how it ends. Allow her a maximum of two or three future positions to get off from, and one or two more holes.

## Why am I so comfortable having real sex with my girlfriend when Skype sex weirds me out?

After reading your question over many hours (for future sentences, should you write any, please know that a wellplaced comma and a whereas can save everyone a lot of time), I assume that you're asking why you like real sex (or "sex," as it was known

before the revolution) better than masturbating across various multimedia platforms to the delight of onlookers, and that is unfortunate. We're sorry to see you go, but mostly we're just hurt you didn't like the online option. It just saves everyone so much trouble down the line—fewer resources, less stress on the infrastructure, etc. And anyway, like it or not, Skype Sex (trademark pending) is a skill you're going to need going forward. My figures estimate that by 2050, 95 percent of you will be too fat to move, so let's get started. Janet Ross of Internet-Modeling.com, the modeling agency for models who appear exclusively on webcams, suggests you and your intended engage in a "fantasy hourlong text message to warm each other up," which sounds like an awful lot of typing, so make sure to stretch out and carbo-load before and probably after. When you go live, says Ross, "don't start [writhing around nude] from the get-go. Ask about each other's day." Ten seconds later, when that peters out, she says, "talk about the text experience you had with each other: What did you like about it, what didn't you?" I guess you can try that, but I've seen your work, and I think you should have some other stuff prepared. If you still find you must carry on having sex in person, please proceed cautiously, wrapped in as many prophylactic barriers as possible. And please don't fall too far off the grid. Drop us a Vine now and then and let us see how it's going.

Got a sex question of your own? E-mail it to us at sex@esquire.com



RINGO STARR

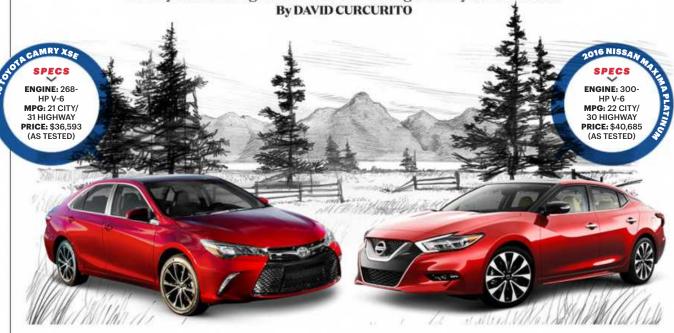
# ROCK OUT IN COMFORT

- ROOMIER FIT
- SKECHERS MEMORY FOAM™
  - INSTANT COMFORT



# **The Cars America Drives**

Two of the top-selling sedans in the country are both damn good cars, loaded with cool features. So why does driving them make me nostalgic for my old '83 Tercel?



An overwhelming number of Americans couldn't care less about what they're driving. To them, their cars might as well be washing machines or refrigerators on the open road.

Just another appliance but with four wheels, satellite radio, air-conditioning, and a backseat large enough for their snot-filled children and Buddy the Lab. So it's a real surprise that the refreshed Toyota Camry—the top-selling car in America—and the all-new version of the car that hopes to be its closest competitor, the Nissan Maxima, are pretty damn good... you know, given the needs of the people who line up to drive them.

One thing is for sure: These two Japanese utilitarian transports have come light-years since their humble beginnings in the '80s. I can personally attest to that, having owned Toyota's base model, the 1983 Tercel, which I lovingly dubbed the Brown Lightning. Today, the Camry has a 3.5-liter, 268-hp V-6 engine and the Maxima I tried has a 3.5-liter, 300-hp V-6. Both are front-wheel drive and kind of fast... especially the Maxima, which gets you to 60 mph in about six seconds. The Brown Lightning, by contrast, had a 1.5-liter, 62-hp manual four-speed that would go from 0 to 60 eventually.

But speed didn't matter, because that car was to be lived in and loved in from point A to point B. Toyota boasted in 1983 that its cars "have the largest interiors of any subcompacts." And with the fold-down rear seats in the hatchback, that car was the perfect camper for up to two people. When I was driving off-road looking for a place to sleep in the Brown Light-

ning, I didn't have to worry about ruining today's standard 18-inch machine-finished alloy wheels. Hell, Lightning had just the flimsy metal rims—no hubcaps, chrome spokes, or cool designs. If you were lucky, voice recognition and navigation was a female passenger holding a map, and a touch screen was something completely sexual that you hoped to receive at the end of the night.

Climate control? The Tercel had a heat-and-venting system that would blow fresh air from the outside of the vehicle to your feet and/or upper body and face. Not cool enough? Well, there were two windows that you could manually roll down for greater comfort, especially when the car was in motion. In the outdoorsleeping months, you'd pop open the hatchback and duct-tape some screen around the opening—now, that's comfort. The heated/ventilated seats of today's Maxima are noticeably better at regulating the temperature of your thighs, ass, and back.

There's a funny feeling you get while driving the Camry and the Maxima. Not the sliding-down-a-rope kind of feeling you get from a BMW M5 or an Audi S6. No, there's a brief moment of confusion because the Maxima and the Camry are available with all the same bells and whistles as vehicles that cost \$30,000 more—LED

lights, adaptive cruise control, rear cross-traffic alert, forward-collision warning, voice recognition, and so on. How can the driver who views a car as an appliance possibly need all this? It's like putting a smartphone in your coffeemaker. It's like bringing a 57-inch flat-screen on a camping trip.

Please pick a camping spot away from the Tercel. 19

### WHAT OUR BROTHERS AT CAR AND DRIVER THOUGHT

# ON THE REFRESHED 2015 CAMRY:

"It remains a car that is most notable for the pulse-calming character that gives it such broad appeal. But if Toyota is going to instill some waku doki [excitement] into this segment with the next

redesign, the company is at least on its way."

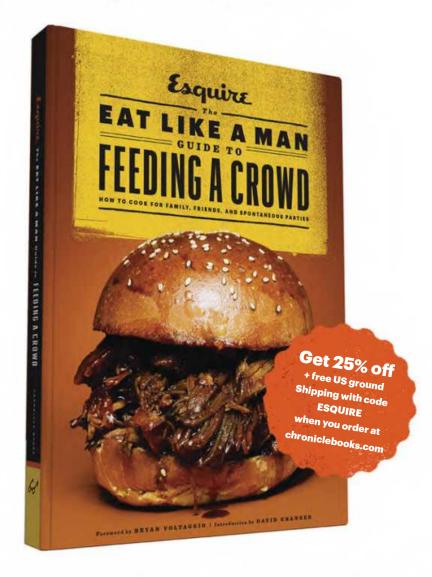
ON THE ALL-NEW

# 2016 MAXIMA:

"This is a sedan that has long claimed to be a four-door sports car... [but it] comes across as sophisticated, luxurious, and refined."

# The only cookbook you'll ever need when the party is at your place!

The ultimate resource for guys who want to host big crowds and need the scaled-up recipes, logistical advice, and mojo to pull it off. Whether they're cooking breakfast for a houseful of weekend guests, producing an apic spread for the playoffs, or planning a backyard BBQ. Includes more than 80 recipes, with favorites from chefs such as Tom Lolicchio, Mario Batali, and Bryan Voltaggio.







# The Triumph of the Ryes

The craze that began a decade ago can no longer be considered a craze

# **Drinking by DAVID WONDRICH**

Fifteen years ago, if you went looking for a bottle of American straight rye whiskey, your chances were lousy. By the end of the 20th century, this foundational style of American whiskey was hanging from the ropes, seeing birdies, and waiting for the towel to hit the canvas. Out of the dozens of brands that were around as late as the 1950s, only two or three were still distributed nationwide, and even those took serious tracking down.

Then the bell rang. Rye caught its breath, squared its shoulders, and came out swinging. If it's not quite winning rounds yet (rye is still a small sector of American whiskey, albeit one that's growing like kudzu), it has certainly won over the judges and is starting to sway the crowd. Indeed, rye is one of the great success stories of the modern spirits industry. What looked like a fad ten years ago now looks like a full-fledged, broad-based revival, with at least 50 brands on the market.

In 2000, those few ryes available came in two kinds. One was made by large old-line whiskey distillers to be just like bourbon but with more spicy rye and less sweet corn in the grain mix. The other was Old Potrero, a young pot-stilled whiskey made from 100 percent malted rye by San Francisco's Anchor Distilling Company. Now there are doz-

ens of microdistilled ryes following in Anchor's footsteps, the big companies' brands have proliferated, and there are a couple other styles available as well. We can't cover them all, but here are five ryes that at least stake out the territory.

KENTUCKY RYES: Made by the oldline distillers, these run the gamut from fighting-weight stalwarts like Old Overholt (available everywhere rye is sold) to things like Heaven Hill's rich, balanced, and just plain excellent revamp of its old [6] Pikesville brand (\$50), which it plucked from the bottom shelf, aged a full six years, and bottled at 110 proof. But they also encompass [2] Woodford Reserve (\$38), a blend of Kentucky-standard column-still whiskey and whiskey made in large Scottish pot stills, which give it a white-chocolate chewiness that nicely balances out its nippy, bitter finish. Almost like an Old-Fashioned in a glass.

**LAWRENCEBURG RYES:** Increased demand for rye brought a lot of hidden rye down from the attic. One of those attic rooms was the MGP distillery in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, which had large stocks of rye intended for blending. You can buy it, bottle it, and sell it as your own, and many companies do. Among the few who readily admitted doing this was [7] Bulleit (\$28), whose bottling of this lean, dry whiskey (MGP uses no corn in its rye, unlike the Kentucky distillers) is exemplary.

It's light and almost fruity in the nose—is that mango we smell?—and clean and elegant in its finish.

THE MICROS: Microdistillers have put out some shockingly bad ryes: underaged, fumy, tannic, pungent. Some, however, are finally getting it right, distilling cleanly and aging to maturity. New York Distilling Company's three-year-old [4] Ragtime Rye (\$45) might have a slight whiff of youngspirit latex in the nose, but that gets buried in roasted orange and dark chocolate, and the first sip tells you this is a rich, even unctuous, spicy, and complex whiskey that is ready for sipping. [3] Leopold Bros. Maryland-Style Rye (\$45), from Colorado, is deliberately lighter and grassier in style but offers bright berry notes on the nose. Although still slightly grainy on the palate, it is also clean and juicy and smooth and just a little bit sweet. If this is the future, we can't wait for the next round. 19

### THE OTHER RYE

Canada makes a lot of whisky, almost all of which it calls rve, no matter what it's made from. Usually that means you get a light, smooth blend, such as [1] J.P. Wiser's (\$20), but the rye revolution is spreading, and now we've got things like [5] Crown Royal Northern Harvest Rye (\$30), an elegant, lean, and spicy straight rye in the Lawrenceburg style.



I thoughton

**MaHB** 

# Amotored The Profile

Television legend Ted Danson kindly asked to make a few notes on our profile of him. The notes were a little less kind.

By MATT GOULET

It wasn't hard for Ted Danson to make it to the interview for this story. All he had to do was take the elevator down from his room at the Greenwich Hotel and meet in the restaurant connected to the lobby. An inside job that was only slightly bungled—Danson got confused and dawdled instead in the lounge on the other side of the building. When he shows up at Locanda Verde, only 12 minutes behind schedule, he's unnecessarily apologetic. These things happen.

Danson's gray hair is neatly swept back, and even though he was just moseying down from his room, he put on a blazer over his black polo. He'd gotten into New York at 1:00 A.M. the previous night and is still on L.A. time, but he looks refreshed. Ready. You moisturize and exercise regularly today in hopes of looking the way Danson does at 67. He's got a little jewelry on. His wedding ring hangs loosely on his finger—did he lose weight recently?—and peeking out from under his polo is the thinnest gold chain. What, if anything, is dangling from it will remain a mystery.

Danson just had breakfast but orders a green tea. He specifically asks that it be "not flowery," and he insists that I get something for myself. I order the crostini of the day, and when the waiter tells me it's topped with salmon confit, I balk. Danson sits on the board of directors of Oceana, the world's largest

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that's not thing that hange



organization dedicated solely to ocean advocacy, which is working to restore sustainability to commercial fishing. I'd hate to eat the wrong kind of fish in front of him. "Should we throw his feet in the fire?" he asks me about our waiter. "Is it farmed salmon?" The waiter, slightly panicked, says it is. Danson tells me to order it anyway, despite, he lets me know, the fact that it takes five pounds of ground-up wild fish to feed and produce one pound of commercially raised salmon. When he talks about the oceans and the organization, his eyes get wider, his gestures larger, his voice louder, and he spits a little as he tells me about the perils of trawling. When the dish arrives, Danson, without asking for a bite, reaches over Droblem I and picks a fleck of the farmed fish off the toast to assuage my guilt.

This month, he'll appear in the second season of Fargo, a prequel to the first season of FX's Emmy-award-winning adaptation of the Coen brothers' classic movie, and in the movie-length series finale of CSI, CBS's long-running mass-appeal police procedural, which will bleed into a short stint on its spin-off, CSI: Cyber. He's on something of a law-enforcement kick, though the two shows couldn't be more different. On CSI, he "lays pipe" as the shift supervisor of the investigative team, setting up expository one-liners to advance the plot. On Fargo, it's all character-driven. He plays an even-keeled county sheriff and World War II vet working opposite Patrick Wilson's younger state patrolman. He knows that both roles—his whole career, really-are built off a foundation of goodwill generated by Cheers and his 11 years as its star.

With Cheers streaming in perpetuity on Netflix and an Internet trove of well-documented hijinks with his castmates-like the time he took too many hallucinogenic mushrooms on John Ratzenberger's boat during a day trip to Catalina with Woody writer was
Harrelson—the image of Ted Danson in the public eye could a forever 25 years all the public eye could a forever 25 years all the public eye could a forever 25 years all the public eyes could a forever 25 years all the public eyes could a forever 25 years all the public eyes could a forever 25 years all the public eyes could be public eyes and the public eyes could be public eyes and the public eyes are public eyes and the public eyes are public eyes and the public eyes and the public eyes are public eyes and the eyes are public eyes are public eyes a easily be of a forever-35-year-old sitcom star. And for a while, he believed he was one. The guy who d coasted through theater school at Carnegie Mellon without ever doing Shakespeare was getting by playing different interpretations of Sam "Mayday" Malone. He'd started dyeing his hair about halfway through Cheers and kept it up through the run of Becker,

The veranda has witnessed many conversations, including the one about whether it's a veranda, and not a porch.

# Host Beautifully





# PAST WORK OF TED DANSON





not my word

CONTINUED

another sitcom where he played a redeemable jerk. It could have gone on like this, but it was becoming tedious. "I'd done so many episodes of sitcoms, I thought I'd burned out mentally. That I can't act, I'm not funny." And then Larry David rescued him.

Performing as himself on *Curb Your Enthusiasm* "was so liberating because it was not really acting and trying to be funny. It was like going out to dinner with Larry and trying to think of different ways to insult him." *Damages*—where he played a hookernailing financial executive, definitively shifting our notion from Ted Danson: sitcom star to Ted Danson: actor—soon followed. And with *Bored to Death*, where he was a self-indulgent magazine editor trying to keep up with bungling 30-something Brooklynites, he finally came to terms with his age.

Over the past few years, between Bored to Death and the birth of his first grandchild, he's surrendered to being the old guy, to taking the backseat. "There was a part right before this when I thought I still could be competitive. That maybe I could beat John Krasinski in a footrace. And then I'd just get killed." This acceptance has been softened by the kindness of his wife, Mary Steenburgen, who has seen her own career recently re-explode through stints on shows like Justified, Orange Is the New Black, and The Last Man on Earth, as well as a country-music publishing gig for Universal Music. Danson couldn't be prouder. When he mentions her, he leans forward to feed me some descriptors: "Mary is glorious, beautiful, stunning, killing it right now."

After we wrap up, he swings back into the restaurant and brings me to the lounge where he thought—probably wished—we were going to meet. It's a nice space. Quiet. No fuss from waiters or other diners side-eyeing him. He lets me know that a few of the girls behind Girls whose parents live in the neighborhood come down to this space to relax and write. It feels like he's gently suggesting that I spend some time down here to see if I can't meet a nice young woman with a TV deal. He also ate farmed salmon on my behalf. He has nothing to prove anymore, but Ted Danson still works for his audience.

not my

I think this
is the part
where I Spat

I spoke with your really shis this into this











# MIENOF SINYIDE ENCAPSULATED



Some call it charm. Some call it swagger. You just know style when you see it. And today's luxurious trend of dressing down well isn't lost on the rising crop of tastemakers, from artists and photographers to chefs and DJs. Here, they detail their daring journeys and how they sport looks from a capsule collection exclusively curated by **style icon Nick Wooster** from nine emerging menswear designers' Fall/Winter 2015 lines shown at NY Men's Day. The individual looks—styled by Wooster and selected for the influential creators by *Esquire* Fashion Director Nick Sullivan—reflect the best of fall fashion, and are available for every man of style to own on Gilt.com this month.



# DJ ENCAPSULATED

Brenmar is all about fresh cuts and fast beats—like his club-loved "Award" EP or new single "Hula Hoop." All of which will keep you feeling as good as he does when he's cruising to his Brooklyn recording space in a Cadillac Escalade.





### **BEHIND THE LOOK WITH NICK SULLIVAN**

"For Brenmar, we were looking for a look that was luxurious but not simple, which meant basic underpinnings like a chambray shirt and jeans. But it's the double-breasted topcoat that is pivotal, in that classic tailored dark camel; worn in place of a suit jacket, it's both functional and elegant."

# **ARTIST ENCAPSULATED**

Artists see the world in shapes and colors and patterns. When Curtis is between the studio and his favorite art boutique, he traverses New York City's cobblestone streets with the help of a thrill-driven Cadillac ATS Coupe.















#### **BEHIND THE LOOK WITH NICK SULLIVAN**

"Curtis's outfit is all about subtle detail. The wool military overcoat has a touch of swagger about it that is very much of the moment, with authentic detailing like epaulettes and five-button cuffs that are balanced by smart and comfortable flannel pants finished off with brown brogue derbies with an interesting gillie lacing."





# RESTAURATEUR ENCAPSULATED

Chef JJ knows the importance of sharing your own interpretation. He describes the style of food he cooks as big and bold which—like the Cadillac ATS Sedan—is nothing short of exhilarating.















1. Royal blue flight jacket (\$298), by CADET.
2. White fine gauge merino turtleneck (\$395), by David Hart 3. Apex, light spotted tortoise Sunglasses (\$340), by Garrett Leight x Mark McNairy 4. Blue flecked brushed wool trouser (\$425), by David Hart 5. Deluxe brown pebble grain leather — Buckle Up (\$550), by Mark McNairy 6. Head-Up Display.



BEHIND THE LOOK WITH NICK SULLIVAN

"JJ's look epitomizes the way things are going with menswear at the moment. A simple blouson jacket over an ecru roll neck departs bravely from the classic idea that the tailored blazer is the bedrock of menswear. Yet it's as timeless an outfit as anything you might have seen on Steve McQueen."

# PHOTOGRAPHER ENCAPSULATED

Running an online style destination means having throes of inspiration, from notable actors and musicians to a long list of best dressed. This explains Sean's penchant for iconic staples that are stunningly crafted, including the Cadillac CTS.













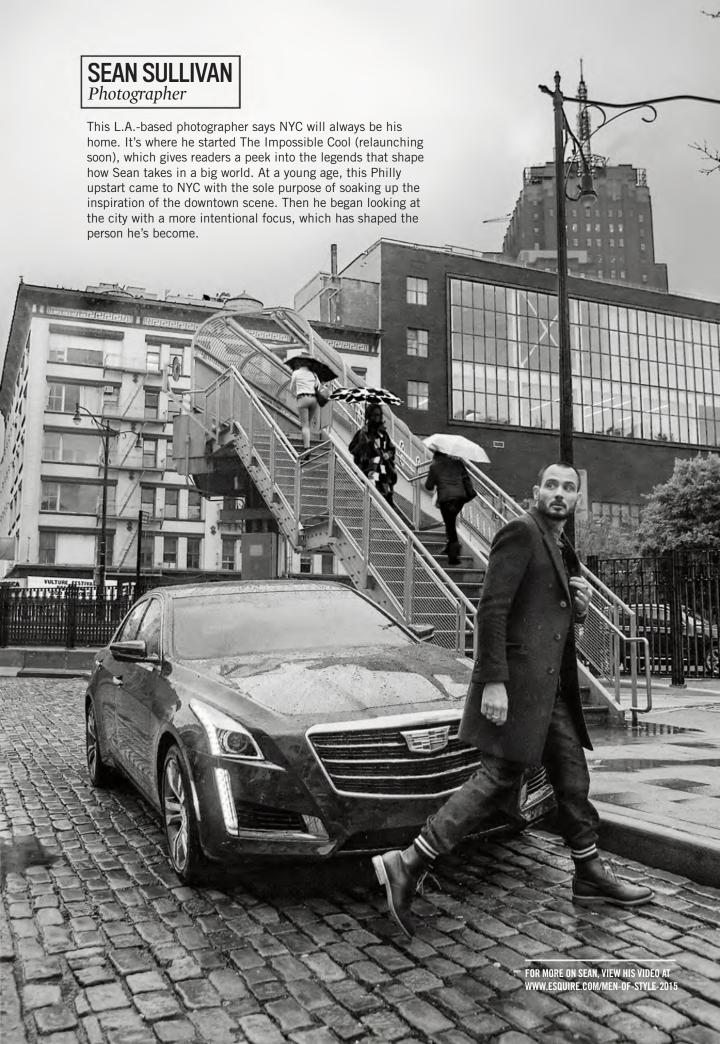
1. Wool top coat (\$895), by Ernest Alexander.
2. Mix Chambray Indigo Fun Shirt (\$235), by Mark McNairy 3. Gray wool combat higgins (\$330), by Mark McNairy 4. Brown pebble grain boot (\$495), by Mark McNairy 5. Pinehurst, demi tortoise sunglasses (\$415), by Garrett Leight x Mark McNairy 6. 4G LTE.





**BEHIND THE LOOK WITH NICK SULLIVAN** 

"Sean's sweatpants are typical of the new casual aesthetic that's taking over in menswear. When they're running around, men increasingly want clothes that perform for them—and look the part—yet always feel comfortable. But they're not sloppy at all; rather, the slim cut and the tailored waistband elevate Sean's look to that new highlow aesthetic that I think is here to stay."



THE CREDIT BELONGS
TO THE MAN WHO IS
ACTUALLY IN THE ARENA,

WHO STRIVES VALIANTLY;

WHO ERRS, WHO COMES SHORT AGAIN AND AGAIN;

WHO KNOWS
GREAT ENTHUSIASMS;

WHO SPENDS HIMSELF IN A WORTHY CAUSE;

WHO AT THE BEST KNOWS IN THE END

THE TRIUMPH OF HIGH ACHIEVEMENT,

AND WHO AT THE WORST,

IF HE FAILS, AT LEAST FAILS WHILE DARING GREATLY.



DARE GREATLY







Style

THE FALL UPGRADES

# IACKETS

KEY WORDS: TEXTURED. MEATY. NOT A TON OF STRUCTURE.

#### 1. THE CARDIGAN JACKET:

Not a swacket, exactly, but an unlined, deconstructed jacket that essentially doubles as a tailored sweater. They're all over the place this fall, and this version, a linen-wool-andsilk blend, hits the sweet spot between work and play. By Canali (\$1,925).

- 2. THE MICROPLAID: In smaller-patterned jackets like this cotton-and-wool-blend two-button, a raised texture sharpens the color and shading contrasts in the pattern and keeps things from getting muddy. By Luigi Bianchi Mantova (price upon request).
- 3. THE BIG PLAID: A man can wear a big pattern, and a man can wear a bold color, but a man

cannot wear a big pattern and a bold color. When blowing it out (with, say, a big-ass windowpane plaid), stick with safer shades, like navy blue and white. By Etro (\$1,574).

#### 4. THE ALL-PURPOSE BLAZER:

Hard to go wrong with basic gray for your everyday blazer, but a subtle herringbone (like the gray-and-black pattern on this jacket) offers that much more character and depth. By Bonobos (\$395).

5. TWEED? Yup. And if you're going full-on tweed, a streamlined cut is everything. This pure Shetland-wool blazer is hardy, but the designer keeps it light and lean. By Freemans Sporting Club (\$995).











#### A GUIDE TO SPEAKING ITALIAN TAILORING

So many good things coming out of Italy these days. Some so hard to pronounce.

Piombo: Pee-um-bo

Ermenegildo Zegna: Air-men-eh-jill-doh Zen-yah

Cesare Attolini: Chay-sa-ray Att-oh-li-ni

**Finamore:** Feen-uh more-av

Boglioli: Bo-leeoh-lee

Eidos: Ee-dos

Lubiam: Lou-bee-am

Isaia: Ee-sigh-ee-uh



TUDOR NORTH FLAG

Self-winding mechanical Manufacture TUDOR MT5621 movement, officially certified chronometer, non-magnetic silicon spring, approx. 70 hour power reserve. Sapphire case back, waterproof to 100 m, 40 mm steel case. Visit tudorwatch.com and explore more. TUDOR Watch U.S.A., LLC. New York





[3]

[1]









THE FALL UPGRADES

KEY WORDS: VERSATILE. PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN. WAIT, IS THAT A WING TIP? YEAH, WE DIDN'T THINK SO.

- 1. THE MEDIUM-BROWN OXFORD: As versatile as versatile gets, with a comfortable rubber sole rendered to look like a refined leather sole. By Johnston & Murphy (\$155).
- 2. WHAT IN THE IS A PLIMSOLL? Not quite a sneaker, a plimsoll is a casual canvas or suede shoe with a thin rubber sole. This beige suede plimsoll from John Lobb is a grown-up alternative to a pair of Vans or other casual kicks. By John Lobb (\$670).
- 3. THE BASIC BLACK DERBY: If you're going for a simple black shoe, don't forget the simple part. This derby from Church's is crafted from a single piece of leather that has no marks or flaws, no toe caps or stitching. All polished, streamlined, inky simplicity. By Church's (\$820).
- 4. THE HIGH-END SNEAKER: The upside of the whole upscale-sneaker trend of the past few years is that it's become easy to get a sneaker that's both really well made and really comfortable. This turquoise calfskin lowtop by Bally, which has been making luxury footwear for 160-some-odd years, will mold to your feet and look good with pretty much everything you own. We wouldn't work out in it, but there's no good reason we couldn't. By Bally (\$495).

5. THE REFINED DESERT BOOT: Not as clunky or chunky as your typical desert boot but every bit as durable and functional, it could easily pair with a navy suit for a day in the office. Or a weekend in the woods. Your call. By Aldo (\$140).

### THE MOST **VERSATILE PANTS** IN THE WORLD

Wear them with anything, and wear them anywhere



**BLUE JEANS NOT TOO DARK** By AG (\$235).



FLANNEL TROUSERS, **CUT SLIM** By CWST (\$395).



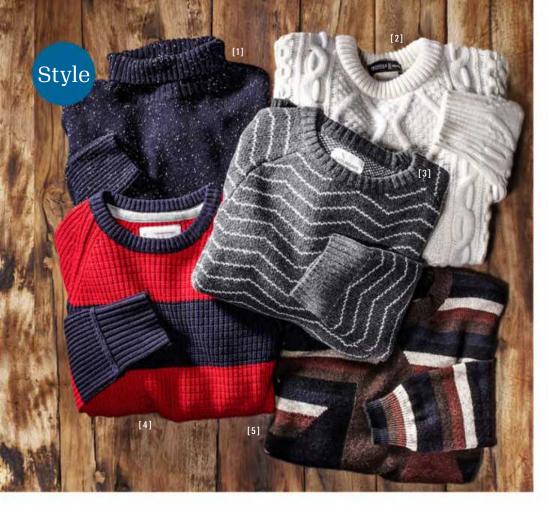
[5]

GRAY CORDS, THIN-WALED By 34 Heritage (\$175).

# Concerning "Athleisure"

By which we mean the incoming class of clothes defined by designers—and by a fashion industry that loves a neologism—as a hybrid between good ol' gymwear and luxury sportswear. (It is the cashmere sweatpants with a slim, tailored fit. It is the flannel trousers with a drawstring waistband and ... what in the ... elastic ankle cuffs?) We understand the impulse to embrace such comforts, and we are all for purpose-driven casual clothes, but remember: Sweatpants will always be sweatpants, no matter the fabric. Wear with care.





THE FALL UPGRADES

# **SWEATERS**

KEY WORDS: PATTERNED. CREWNECK. TURTLENECK, BUT ONLY IF IT'S NOT BEEFY.

- **1. A TURTLENECK?** You betcha. Choose black or dark blue for maximum impact; bonus points for a flecked Donegal pattern. *By Oliver Spencer* (\$365).
- **2. THE NEXT-GEN CABLE-KNIT:** There's been a quiet revolution in sweaters over the past few years, owing mostly to innovations in print techniques and 3-D printing, and the 200-year-old Pringle of Scotland has helped lead the charge with the likes of this multidimensional cable-knit sweater. *By Pringle of Scotland (\$1,595)*.
- **3. THE UPSIDE OF ACRYLIC:** There is an obvious and just suspicion of nonnatural fibers in sweaters, but in the right hands (and when blended with

fine wool, as in this crewneck), acrylic can provide all the warmth and softness of wool without the weight. *By Saturdays NYC* (\$175).

- **4. CONSIDER THE WAFFLE:** Most waffle textures show up in henleys and other layering items, but a good waffle sweater, like this striped merino-wool-blend crewneck from Banana Republic, works as a stellar top note. *By Banana Republic* (\$90).
- **5. THE NEW NEUTRALS:** Add to your arsenal of navy-blue or heather-gray sweaters with this striped geometric pattern, which combines all of your favorite neutrals in one wool crewneck. *By Paul Smith* (\$755).



# THE INNOVATION: GASSED CASHMERE

CREATED BY ITALY'S MOLTO MAD SCIENTIST MASSIMO ALBA, THIS WOOL IS SLIGHTLY BURNED TO REMOVE ALL THE FUZZ AND FLYAWAYS, THEREBY LEAVING A CLOTH THAT IS SOFT AND CASHMERELIKE BUT TOTALLY FLAT. SWEATER (\$1,030).



Cosby

INADVISABLE









- **1. THE BASEBALL JACKET:** A down-filled wool torso and contrasting cobalt-blue nylon sleeves: This ain't the average baseball jacket, and it's fully reversible, to boot. By Herno (\$975).
- 2. THE PEACOAT: This fall staple comes in all cloths and colors, but for something closer to the original, go for this melton-wool coat from Woolrich. It's naturally water- and wind-resistant and warm when you need it to be. By Woolrich John Rich & Bros. (\$650).
- 3. THE FIELD JACKET: Totally practical, endlessly washable, and equipped with enough pockets for whatever ground war needs waging. Plus, there's a drawstring cord to ensure a better fit around

the waist and a convertible hood that pops up when the weather gets rough. By Gap (\$98).

- 4. REGARDING THE BLOUSON: Also known as a thin, lightweight windbreaker-like coat without a lot of bells and whistles. When made of leather (e.g., this Façonnable coat), it's all the more soft and supple. By Façonnable (\$5,250).
- **5. THE SHEARLING COAT:** This is the big gun for when the weather gets serious. It has an olive suede body and contrasting charcoal shearling on the collar, and its manufacturers stipulate that it will wear well through "at least two generations." By Eidos Napoli (\$2,995).

# The Fall-Coat Lightning Round

When in doubt and all other things being equal

LONGER OR SHORTER? Shorter. LINED OR UNLINED? **HOOD OR NO HOOD?** 

ZIP OR BUTTON? Zip for functionality. Button for looks. PATCH OR SET-IN POCKETS? Doesn't matte **BLACK OR NAVY?** 

Navy. Or any color, really, other than black.

**WOOL OR COTTON?** Wool for durability. Cotton for versatility. **WOOL OR LEATHER?** Wool for warmth, Leather for luxury, **COAT OR NO COAT?** 



# AND HOW TO

TWO COMPETING SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING DRESSED THIS FALL

LOW/HIGH: Start with your everyday casual basics and finish them off by adding one or more formal articles of clothing, like a blazer or leather lace-ups. 1. Double-breasted wool coat (\$1,300) by Luigi Bianchi Mantova. 2. Three-button wool-blend jacket (\$995) by L.B.M. 1911. 3. Wool turtleneck (\$145) by Michael Kors. 4. Cotton jeans (\$78) by Levi's. 5. Leather boots (\$295) by Allen Edmonds. 6. Leather belt (\$195) by Paul Smith.

HIGH/LOW: Start with your business-meeting best and swap leather sneakers for your dress shoes and/or a ghost tie for your actual tie. You're still wearing a suit, but you're wearing it your way. Big difference. 1. Threebutton wool-blend coat (\$3,190) by Dunhill. 2. Two-button wool-mohair suit (\$2,500) by Dunhill, 3. Cotton-and-silk shirt (\$430) by Dunhill. 4. Leather sneakers (\$350) by To Boot New York.

# **Ask Nick** Sullivan

OUR FASHION DIRECTOR WILL NOW TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS



I have \$2,000. What's the best watch in my price range—something I can wear anywhere, forever?

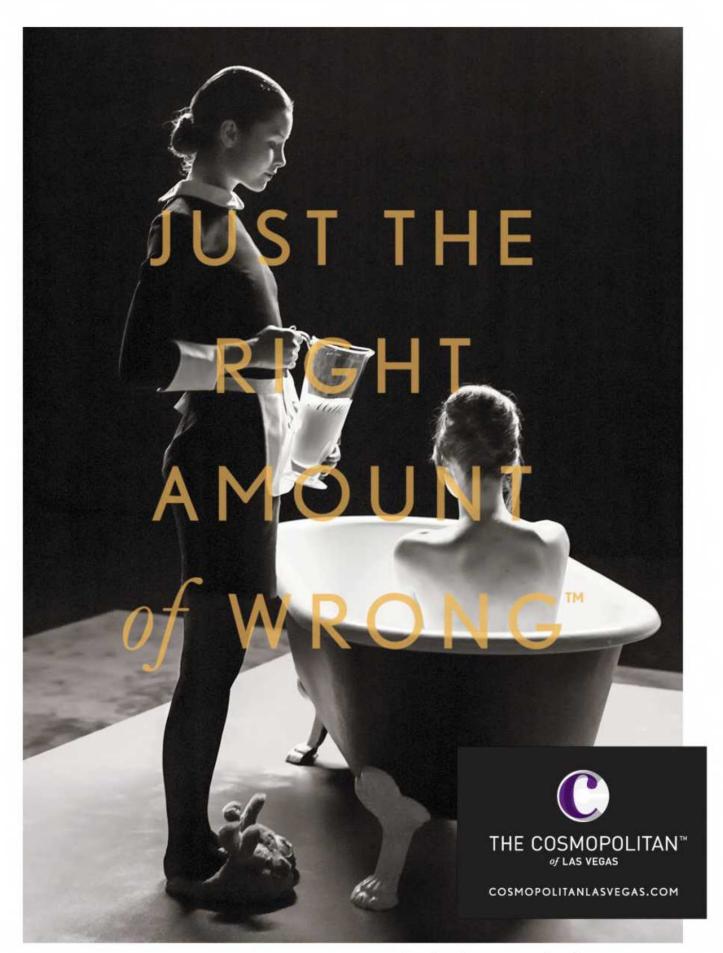
> **BRIAN TANNER** COLUMBUS, OHIO

This year has been kind to watch lovers on a budget, as plenty of brands have been providing quality watches at good prices. Start with Oris's retro Divers Sixty-Five [Fig. 1, \$1,850] or TAG Heuer's Formula 1 McLaren limited edition (\$1,550), which celebrates 30 years of TAG Heuer's collaboration with the F1 race team. If you're into something slimmer, try Oris's limited-edition Thelonius Monk (\$1,900), the latest in its ongoing jazz-legends series.

I've developed a bit of a gut recently and feel a little self-conscious about it. What can I wear to de-emphasize my belly? I mean, other than Spanx for guys?

ALEX H. PORTLAND, OREG.

You and me both, Alex. It's amazing how shirts manage to magically untuck themselves with as little as a few pounds gained. I think Spanx might lessen potential wobble, but they don't make you look any slimmer, so that's not really a solution. Belting your pants tightly under your belly, meanwhile, just makes things worse. There is only one real solution: Get rid of the gut. The best incentiveit's working for me right now-is to buy your clothes a touch on the tight side. That way you can decide if you love your clothes more than your belly and act accordingly.



### THE NOT-SO-**BATTERED FOOT**

HOW BOTH SANDAL LOUNGERS AND ENDURANCE ATHLETES CAN TAKE BETTER CARE OF THE MOST ABUSED EXTREMITY

BY RODNEY CUTLER

First, a question: Do you wash your feet? As in, while showering, do you lift them up or crouch or sit cross-legged on the shower floor in your sailor cap\* and scrub them with soap? (Do not confuse these with just splashing them around.) Many people—Olympic endurance athletes included—forget this basic hygienic process, which would rid them of, say, three quarters of their problems. However, you can do more.



#### **Your shoes**

Everyone: Stagger two pairs. It takes more than a day for

the sweat in your shoes to dry, but most day-jobbers allow about half that between wears. Dampness accumulates, making your shoes a lovely château for bacteria, which smell, or fungi, which itch. If needed, try common talcum powder, too—or in dire circumstances, a high-caliber antiperspirant like Certain Dri Clinical Strength (\$7; shop.dsehealth. com), which you can get without a prescription.

Athletes: Stagger two pairs for dryness. But when breaking in a new set, switch mid-workout instead of daily. Wear the new ones first to mold them into form, but put on the old pair before the friction blisters your foot. (Yes, this requires the purchase of new footwear before the current pair tears at the seams.) If it's too late, use antibiotic cream and a covering, like a bandage or Spenco 2nd Skin (\$11; spenco.com), which adds a cooling sensation.



#### Your socks Everyone: Use them. Wash them. Do not reuse them before

washing them. Athletes: See above.



**Everyone:** Trim them, leaving a short edge that hangs over

the end of the toe. Cut them straight across: don't dig into corners. Going too short can lead to ingrown nails.

Athletes: Trim them just shy of the end of your toes so that you don't bash the end of your nail into the toe box of your shoe step after step. This should help avoid blackened nails-but also know that you can safely grow out a black nail. As for a loose black nail: Fasten it with a Band-Aid or, if the skin below isn't too raw, sure, pull it off.



#### That dryness

**Everyone:** As you get older, your sweat and oil alands decrease.

Spread a thin layer of petroleum ielly over your feet nightly. Not enough to stain your sheets. Not beneath socks. Not in between your toes (keep that area dry). The jelly will moisturize better than lotions, which are waterbased and don't hydrate as well.



#### Those calluses Athletes: Building calluses is your foot's

way of cushioning its contact with the ground. Wearing inserts like the

This little piggy went to bed and didn't cause its owner's wife to recoil.

**Hapad sports replacement** insoles (\$18; hapad.com) will minimize that collision. You can also use the **Emjoi** Micro-Pedi callus remover (\$40; emjoi.com) to buff them away, as the top layers of calluses are just dead skin anyway.

\*Note: Wearing a sailor cap has no proven medical benefit.

With thanks to Thomas DeLauro. chair of medical sciences, New York College of Podiatric Medicine, and Ralph Reiff, executive director of St. Vincent Sports Performance and manager of athlete care for the 1996 Olympic Games.

Rodney Cutler is an Ironman triathlete and the owner of Cutler salons in New York City.

#### ADVICE FROM AN OLYMPIAN TURNED RUNNING-STORE OWNER

With Bob Kennedy, former holder of the American records for the 3K, twomile, and 5K, and president of Movin Shoes.

It's partly about the type of shoe. Most people pronate, meaning as their foot strikes the ground, their ankle rolls inward. Experts at your local running store can see whether you pronate a lot. (The at-home test doesn't work well.) If so, they may recommend a denser midsole, the cushy material of which works against the pronation. But it's also about the fit. We all have different foot shapes and nuances to our toes and arches. Experts can see all that, too. 18



#### HART SCHAFFNER MARX

MADE IN THE USA



Esquire has partnered with Ford to bring you The Code, an editorial program inspired by the all-new 2015 Ford F-150, and the men who drive them. From the skills every man should have and the latest in gear to smart news and entertainment, The Code brings the spirit of "Built Ford Tough" to life.



## MEET THE AIR FORCE'S MOST ELITE UNIT

ararescue jumpers—a.k.a. PJs—are the most elite unit in the U.S. Air Force, and perhaps the least well-known special operations team on earth. PJs are trained to recover and provide medical care in the harshest and most dangerous environments. You'll know them by their maroon berets, which signify that they've completed the grueling two-year training program—sometimes called "Superman School."

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#### DROUGHT HACKING: HOW TO WASH YOUR CAR OR TRUCK WITH A SINGLE CUP OF WATER



**BREAK DOWN THE DIRT** 

Don't just take a hose and sponge to your vehicle; instead use a water-based, eco-friendly cleaner to break the dirt down.



LIFT IT OFF

Rather than using an old rag that will likely just spread the dirt around, use a high quality microfiber towel to lift off the loosened dirt.



**FORGET THE HOSE** 

A garden hose pumps out 10 gallons a minute. Save water and prevent streaks by using a spray bottle and just a cup of water. It's what the pros do, and Mother Nature will thank you.



**CLEAN REGULARLY** 

Prevent serious dirt buildup by cleaning your vehicle at least once every other week. A few minutes here and there will save you time and elbow grease in the long run.



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# BESIT'S EVERNERAL BEST TO BE STATE OF THE BEST TO BE S

Let us take a moment to marvel at the only game that matters to the whole United States of America

BY TOM JUNOD



enough that football endangered bodies; now it endangered the souls of those who played it, and even the game's climactic spectacle—a grand, cathartic Super Bowl—labored under accusations that Tom Brady and the New England Patriots had cheated in order to get there. In short, the 2014 football season should have been the season





WWW MOORER I

#### ESQUIRE SPORTS

that broke football's hold on America's imagination and viewing habits. It wasn't. More people watched the "deflated" Super Bowl than ever, and, if anything, football strengthened its position as the only sport that Americans watch regardless of rooting interest and therefore the only sport that really matters on a national level. If anything, the determined suasion of the scolds and pundits seemed to intensify our interest rather than discourage it, in fulfillment of their darkest suspicions:

That we watch football as a matter of habit;

That we watch football, indeed, as a matter of addiction;

That we are in the grip of Big Football in the same way that we are in the grip of Big Oil, Big Food, and the entire Military Industrial Complex.

There is, however, another explanation for the persistence of our love affair with football, despite its dicey reputation and the moral costs of our patronage. Indeed, far from defying explanation, football's continued popularity rests on an explanation so simple that it borders on simplistic:

We tolerate what happens off the field because of what happens on the field.

We love football because the game of football is better than it has

ever been, and is somehow managing to attain, at the same time, an apogee of opprobrium and excellence.

Yes, this is a pigskinned version of what may

be called the foie-gras argument: "But it tastes so good!" It also may seem self-evident to anyone with more than a passing interest in the sport. But it's worth elaborating on because most of the arguments against football don't bother taking football into account. Football endures because football, more than any other sport, evolves, leaving previous iterations of itself in the dust. Let's say the

modern era of sport began in the 1980s, when athletes across the board had won a share of



power, when corporate sponsorships had taken hold and there was real money to be made. Many of the athletes and teams from that time match up well with the athletes and teams of today. Sugar Ray Leonard takes Floyd Mayweather Jr. in a fistfight because he makes it a fistfight. Magic Johnson's Lakers rise above Stephen Curry's Warriors in six. The '86 Mets prevail over Keith Hernandez's habit of smoking in the dugout and beat whoever it was who won the World Series last year in a seventh game. It is only football, as played by even average college and pro teams in 2014, that would be unrecognizable to the players credited with inventing the modern game at "the U" and at Bill Walsh's San Francisco 49ers. This is not to say that there are no players from those teams who could compete in the modern game. It is simply to say that the modern game of football did not begin in the 1980s, or in any other far-off decade. It began last season. It will begin again when this season starts.

Of course, the argument that football has moved relentlessly forward and that today's version of the game outstrips its predecessors' has become part of the argument against its existence or at least for its radical reform: Players have gotten too big and too fast, and the human body was not meant for the havoc wrought by 320-pound men with more speed than many of the Hall of Fame running backs

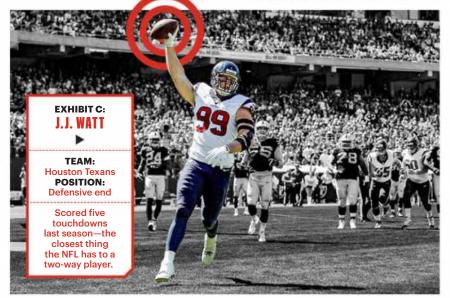
who played in the sixties and seventies. This is true, as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. We frequently hear that football, once considered a contact sport, is now a collision sport, with the relentlessness of its collisions accounting for the relentlessness of its carnage.

But football has evolved not just toward violence but also toward verticality. It has quite literally elevated itself, and, once played mostly on the ground, it's now played more and more in the air. Its greatest athletes are its quarterbacks, its wide receivers, and its defensive backs, and they have brought something to the game that the game is not famous for:

An element of beauty.

Now, most of the world shares the opinion that the "beautiful game" is soccer. But that's because in most of the world the greatest athletes grow up playing soccer, and the sport's beauty belongs to them. In the United States, at least for the generation presently afield, the greatest athletes gravitate toward football, and if you need any proof of that contention, look only so far as the team that America assembled to pursue the men's World Cup last summer. Yes, they played with determination and a desperate valor. They were inspiring. But they were earthbound, and they not only didn't have an Odell Beckham among them, they didn't have a Kam Chancellor.

Beckham *might* have been among them; after all, he was invited to try out for the U.S. national team when he was barely a teenager. But he was born to play American football, as anyone familiar with YouTube knows. Beckham's the wide receiver for the New York



Giants who, as a rookie, "broke the Internet" with the one-handed catch he made against the Dallas Cowboys on a Sunday-night game in November-interfered with, falling down, his back nearly parallel to the turf, he stuck out his arm and grabbed the ball out of the air, a pass thrown by Eli Manning that spiraled one way while Beckham twisted the other. It was not so much the impossibility of the catch that inspired the sudden frenzied speculation that Beckham might be, on the basis of a single unlikely grab, the most gifted athlete in the world; it

was the certainty of it, the fact that tapes of Beckham's workouts revealed that he practiced for it, and that such marvels were, for him, a matter of routine. Beckham's catches in practice tell us everything we need to know about what he believes is required to play in the NFL, and about a level of play that seems, at times, to rise above even the pain of playing.

And that's where Kam Chancellor comes in. In the Seattle Seahawks' playoffgame against the Carolina Panthers, he tried to block a field goal by jumping over the players massed at the line of scrim-

mage, about five feet in the air. He got to the kicker but somehow missed the kick. No matter: The Panthers were called for illegal procedure, and so, on the Panthers' second attempt, Chancellor did it again... and it was the "again" that had the same effect as Beckham's practice tapes, because it testified not just to Chancellor's leaping ability but to a game that has been transformed on both sides of the ball.

TEAM:

Dallas Cowboys

**POSITION:** Wide receiver

Catch/drop against

Green Bay defied

not just gravity but

the interpretive

capacities of the naked eve

People who dislike football on aesthetic rather than moral grounds have always complained about its sluggish pace, its relative lack of action—the sight of eleven men with fat asses standing around and waiting for the inevitable TV time-out. But that's an outdated objection. The teams that now dominate the sport in both college and the pros attack their opponents nearly every play, with offenses trying to score on each possession and defenses trying to take the ball away. J. J. Watt of the Houston Texans scored five touchdowns last season, and he's a freaking defensive end. The dominant cliché of the game the one that coaches intone about players needing to "make plays," and all its variations—has also reshaped the game, for players like Watt, like Chancellor, and like Beckham concede nothing, contest everything, and play not only with a level of aggression but also with a lack of inhibition that makes them seem, in the best way, unhinged.

This is not by accident; this is by design. If what has always been most objectionable about football is the risk incurred by its players, what has been most obnoxious is the cult of its coaches-their systems, their playbooks, their generalissimo-style silences, their deranged technocratic pretensions. And yet it's the cult of the coach that has caused football to evolve so rapidly, and to become, more than ever, a game of ideas. The spread, the no-huddle, the zone-read option: These are all genuine innovations that have accelerated the game and forced defenses to defend the entire field, and they've all come about as the result of football's capacity for something like intellectual ferment. Change comes to the pros by way of college, and often to college by way of high school, and it's turned the fabled "game of inches" into a game of microns, with quarterbacks daring to throw the ball into tighter and tighter spaces and wide receivers making catches that defy not just gravity but the interpretive capacities of the naked eye.



Will we ever know whether Dez Bryant really failed to make that leaping catch down the sideline at the end of the Cowboys' playoff game against Green Bay? We won't, even though it was parsed like a parable by the instant-replay cameras and the scholars in the booth. Will we ever know why Pete Carroll asked Russell Wilson to throw over the middle with the Seattle Seahawks on the oneyard line of the New England Patriots in the waning moments of the Super Bowl? We won't, because the play he called seems to be, in retrospect, the only play that could have lost the Seahawks the game.

What we do know, however, is that both plays are not outliers but rather entirely representative of the way football is now played in the NFL. Tony Romo threw to Bryant with the Cowboys facing fourthand-two, at midfield; he could have gone short, and ten years ago, he would have. Instead, he saw Bryant with single coverage down the field, and so, with that little hop-step of his and his short-armed motion, he hoisted it high, and Bryant went up for it, in midair sprawl over a defender, and came down to the ground still suspended between possibility and impossibility, where, alas, he remained.

And Wilson threw the ball into a crowded cluster instead of handing it to Marshawn Lynch or faking the handoff to Lynch and bootlegging it around the end. That would have been too easy. But let's remember: The pass that Wilson threw was nearly perfect, and it would have gone for a score if an unknown rookie named Malcolm Butler hadn't contested it, hadn't attacked it, hadn't made a damned play by the margin of a micron. Wilson's pass was a dare; so was Butler's pick; and that's what football has become, game in and game out, its impossible excellence the only thing about it that's not objectionable.

Is it enough? Is it enough that football, at every level, is the best it's ever been, that it's reached what might be called its terminal apotheosis? It probably isn't. After all, the game, as it's now played in the NFL, is bolstered by a generation of at least five Hall of Fame quarterbacks, and although Tom Brady won the Super Bowl, Aaron Rodgers won the MVP, and Peyton Manning broke the record for career touchdown passes, they can't play forever. And we keep hearing that American mothers are no longer permitting their boys to play football and are eagerly steering them into safer sports. But this doesn't take into account the fact that even if there is no football in the future, there will still be Odell Beckhams and Kam Chancellors. There will still be J. J. Watts and Tony Romos and Dez Bryants. There will still be Russell Wilsons and Malcolm Butlers. As hard as it is to imagine them playing football in some more equitable and less violent American future, it is even harder to imagine them sacrificing everything they have to play lacrosse or soccer or ... well, anything else, really, but this blood sport that keeps evolving into America's beautiful game.





THIS IS MACHINE WASHABLE
TECHNICAL CASHMERE™



Ten years after the storm, there's still a city at the mouth of the Mississippi. Just not the same one.

Y CHARLES P. PIERCE

#### **PROLOGUE** A HOT DAY TO BURY SOMEONE

It was a bright, hot morning at the end of June, one of those Louisiana days when the heat and the humidity make a shawl of the air long before noon. Traffic was piling up along Crowder Boulevard near where the land ends and the lake begins. Automobiles and motorcycles were parked willy-nilly all around the intersection of Crowder and Morrison, stashed side by each on the grass of the island dividing the boulevard, overwhelming the parking lot of the barbecue-meat place and the checkcashing joint a little ways down from the intersection. For the most part, these were not civilian vehicles. Most of the cars had red lights on their roofs. Most of them had emblems on their doors. Kenner. Slidell. Gretna. The Louisiana State Police motorcycle honor guard. Occasionally, there was the brief blast of

> A woman walks along the rebuilt Industrial Canal levee, Lower Ninth Ward, May 2015.



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a siren, just to clear the road. There was going to be a funeral at St. Maria Goretti, and nobody wanted to be late.

They were burying Daryle Holloway that morning, a member of the New Orleans Police Department shot and killed in the line of duty a week earlier. All over the spreading lawn in front of the church, cops in formal uniform stood in small groups, tugging their tight collars, angling for what little breeze there was. A great spreading oak tree provided blessed shade. Gradually, in twos and threes, the assembled police from all over the state gravitated to the cool darkness beneath it. Two aging police horses stood alone in the sun, drooping as though they would melt right into the earth. It was the last week in June, and they were burying Daryle Holloway.

A week earlier, down on North Claiborne Avenue, Daryle Holloway had rolled up to transport a guy named Travis Boys to the Orleans Parish Prison. Somehow, according to police, Boys got free of his handcuffs. Somehow, Boys got hold of a gun. He

shot Holloway through the partition that separated them in Holloway's patrol car. They struggled in the car until Boys got out and ran. Holloway, dying at this point, rammed his patrol car into a utility pole. He died in a hospital an hour later.

Freddie DeJean wandered amid the police cruisers and the satellite trucks that were scattered like jackstraws on the island in the middle of Crowder Boulevard. He was there because Daryle Holloway had gone to St. Augustine High School with his stepson, Malord Gales. "He got along with everybody, man," Freddie said. "Daryle was the type of police officer, man, that you would wish he would stop you. Because he gon' talk to you. You know? He's not like some of the police officers, you know, they talk to you bad. You know? He wasn't that way, man. I'm hoping that maybe some of the NOPD would take a page out of Daryle's book and do like he did toward the people of the community." In 2001, Malord Gales was shot dur-

ing a robbery at a grocery store, and he has been in a persistent vegetative state ever since. Freddie rented a van so that Malord could come out this morning and say goodbye.

That was the way it was on that bright, hot morning. Everyone, it seemed, had a story to tell about Daryle Holloway. A lot of those stories had to do with what is now known in New Orleans, a decade later, simply as the storm.

On August 30, 2005, a day after Hurricane Katrina came raging out of the Gulf of Mexico and right about the time when a lot of Holloway's fellow officers were abandoning the city to whatever came next, Holloway made his way to Charity Hospital, the great art deco monument to a different time and a different kind of medical care that loomed above Tulane Avenue like ancient Troy above the plains of Turkey. At that point, Charity was a virtual island, cut off from the rest of the city and, indeed, from the rest of the world. Its basement had flooded, taking out the massive building's electrical systems. Olander Holloway, Daryle's mother, was the head nurse in Charity's emergency department. Her son went to the hospital to make sure she was all right and to see what he could do to help. By then, all of Charity Hospital was an emergency department. Hell, all of New Orleans was an emergency department.

For the next several days, Daryle Holloway went out on boats all over the city to rescue people who were trapped in their homes or stuck on their rooftops. He was not a small man. His friends jived at him that the little boats they were using might not be able to handle him, that they'd all capsize somewhere in the Lower Ninth. This would have been a problem. Daryle Holloway couldn't swim. One of Holloway's friends showed a picture to New Orleans Times-Picayune columnist Jarvis De-Berry in which Holloway is leading a family out of the attic of their flooded house, where they had been trapped for several days. But there is a more famous picture of Daryle Holloway.

It was taken by a doctor named Bennett deBoisblanc, who had been running the critical-care department throughout the

storm and the long, painful week that followed. Holloway is shown sitting on the low concrete wall of an emergency ramp at Charity Hospital. His shirt is unbuttoned and he wears on his face what combat veterans undoubtedly would call a Thousand-Yard Stare. The background in the photo looks as though someone were playing a trick with the camera. Everything in it-a car, a fallen street sign, what appears to be a streetlamp-stands atop its own inverted reflection. It takes a moment before you realize what you're seeing there behind the picture of the exhausted Daryle Holloway. Everything in the background is floating.

It is the story of that picture that was the story so many people now told about Daryle Holloway. A story that connected to so many other stories through the prism of what happened to New Orleans ten years ago. It is the connective tissue that binds Daryle Holloway's story, and his life, and even his death, to so many other

stories, so many other lives, so many other deaths. That was the story that they told on the bright, hot morning on which they buried him. It was a beautiful day. There wasn't a cloud in the sky.



New Orleans police officer Daryle Holloway, September 1, 2005, exhausted from a day rescuing the trapped and desperate from the attics and rooftops of New Orleans. Holloway would not live to see the tenth anniversary of the storm.

ALL ARCHAEOLOGY is about layers, one city laid atop the others, as though civilization were coming from deep in the earth and piling itself up toward the sky. In the late nineteenth century, when the German adventurer and archaeologistand part-time fantast—Heinrich Schliemann went looking for the city of Troy, he found eleven of them, one atop another. At one level, Schliemann found a cache of gold and jewelry that he pronounced to be the treasure of Priam, the king of Troy at the time of the events of the *Iliad*. He was wrong. The gold had been found at what later was determined to be only Troy II. It is popularly believed now that Troy VII was the site of the war about which Homer wrote. There are bronze arrowheads there, and skeletons bearing the marks of horrendous injuries, and there is evidence of a great fire. What

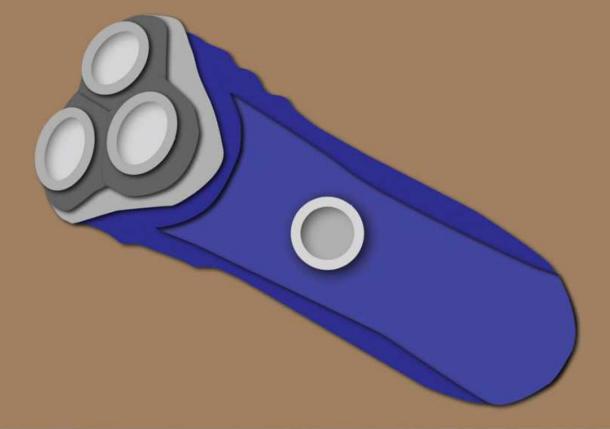
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Schliemann wrote when he first made his discoveries there has held remarkably true for all the layers of Troy that have been unearthed since then:

"I have proved that in a remote antiquity there was in the Plain of Troy a large city, destroyed of old by a fearful catastrophe, which had on the hill of Hissarlik only its Acropolis, with its temples and a few other large edifices, whilst its lower city extended in an easterly, southerly, and westerly direction, on the site of the later Ilium; and that, consequently, this city answers perfectly to the Homeric description of the sacred site of Ilios."

There is an archaeology to human lives, too, and it is very much the same. Human lives have layers, one atop the other, as though the individual were rising from the dust of creation toward the stars. Some of the layers show nothing much at all. Some of them, like the dark layers at Troy that indicate a vast fire, show that something very important happened to the lives in question. Hurricane Katrina, and all of the myriad events surrounding it, both good and bad, is that vast, sweeping layer within the lives of the people of New Orleans. Almost fifteen hundred people died. There was \$100 billion in damage. The levees failed. The city flooded. The city, state, and federal governments failed even worse than the levees did. It was estimated in 2006 that four hundred thousand people were displaced from the city; an estimated one hundred thousand of them never returned. Parts of the city recovered. Parts of the city were rebuilt. Parts of the city gleam now brighter than they ever did. There will be parades on the anniversary of the storm because there are things in the city to celebrate, but it is the tradition in this city that the music doesn't lively up and the parade really doesn't start until the departed has been laid to rest, until what is lost is counted, and until the memories are stored away. Only then does the music swing the way the music is supposed to sound. Only then do they begin to parade.

There will be some joy in the tenth-anniversary celebration because of this, but the storm is there in everyone, a dark layer in the archaeology of their lives. For some people, it is buried deeply enough to be forgotten. For others, the people who live in the places that do not gleam and that are not new, it is closer to the surface. A lot of the recovery is due to what author

Naomi Klein refers to as "disaster capitalism." The city has been reconfigured according to radically different political imperatives—in its schools and its housing and the general relationship of the people to their city and state governments. Many of them felt their lives taken over by anonymous forces as implacable as the storm was. There will be some sadness in the tenth anniversary because of this, fresh memories of old wounds, a sense of looming and ongoing loss. The storm is the dark layer in all the lives. And because it is, the storm is what unites them still, like that burned layer of Troy.

It is what connects the memory of Daryle Holloway to that of Bennett de-Boisblanc, both of whom worked to save lives at Charity Hospital, which is now closed, never to reopen. It connects them all, this dark layer in the deep strata of their lives. It connects Charity Hospital

to the Lower Ninth Ward in the life of Irma Mosley, who was born at Charity fifty-four years ago and who now works at a community center in the Lower Ninth. It is on St. Claude Avenue, not far from where Daryle Holloway, whose mother worked at Charity, was shot and killed.

#### **PART ONE** CRASH ON THE LEVEE

There are signs of life along St. Claude in the Lower Ninth. But move a little bit off the main drag and you see the empty staircases, line after line of them, usually three brick steps leading into nothing but the air. Once, those steps led into the houses that made up neighborhoods. Now they sit like disembodied limbs of a great vanished beast. The Lower Nine always was an island of sorts; as the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth, the city fathers of New Orleans decided to build what is now called the Industrial Canal to connect Lake Pontchartrain to the Mississippi River. The new canal bisected the Ninth Ward and created what became known as the Lower Ninth Ward.

On August 29, 2005, the storm surge from Hurricane Katrina roared up the Industrial Canal and also up another nearby waterway with sufficient power that the levee on the Industrial Canal collapsed with a huge roar. The floodwaters ripped houses from their foundations, leaving behind only the mute staircases when the waters finally receded. They carried a gigantic barge through the breach in the levee and dropped it on a bus. People were rescued from rooftops. People drowned in the streets and suffocated in their attics. This was where Daryle Holloway drifted in his tiny boat, listening for muted cries from the houses. And for the next several days, as the country watched in amazement and horror, it was the Lower Ninth, and the people who lived there, that became the face of the storm. They were poor. They were sick. They were a part of the country that the rest of the country ignored until there were bodies in the street and cries from the rooftops. There was sympathy, for sure. But there also was a thinly veiled contempt for the neighborhood and for the peo-



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ple who lived there. Only the Lower Ninth was ringed by troops. (Even later, when the residents were allowed back in by thenmayor, now convict, Ray Nagin, they had to convince national guardsmen to let them back to what was left of their property.) Businessmen and politicians elsewhere in New Orleans and Louisiana openly expressed relief that the neighborhood had been scoured of its residents. There was a strong political movement, led by one Dennis Hastert, simply to abandon the place for good.

Today, along St. Claude, there are small shops and chain drugstores, but the Lower Nine is still poor and crime is still rampant. The All Souls Episcopal Church & Community Center is a sort of oasis amid the troubles of the present and the troubled memories of the past. Young children skitter through the halls until they

see Happy Johnson, the director of the center, who makes them all go back the way they came and walk like ladies and gentlemen should. Everybody's going on a field trip this afternoon. There is a charge running through the place that is at odds with the stolid, unchanging poverty along the street outside.

Johnson is a son of the Chicago projects. His father was long gone and his mother was on drugs, and Happy bounced between foster homes and the Ida B. Wells Homes. He made it out, got accepted to Georgetown, and in November of 2005, he came to New Orleans and to the Lower Nine to help with the relief effort. He never has left.

"You know, people kind of at the brink of despair, hopelessness, kind of trying to figure out how to actually go about rebuilding their lives," Johnson recalls. "I joined a Red Cross disasterrelief unit that took these mobile feeding units to different places throughout the city to feed folks. So, you know, I saw the same people pretty much every day for about six or seven weeks coming to our van to get food. So even though it was a lot of despair and hopelessness, I still felt like I saw the true spirit of the people in New Orleans, because in the line, people would sing and they would find people that they knew. You know, basically made this my home. I felt a sense of connection to the place, which was very easy to do. It was easy to do that because of my own childhood."

Johnson has lived through all the broken promises and false starts that have marked the life of the Lower Nine since the storm. He has heard all the conspiracy theories, and he has seen

Some places here were preserved. Some were not. Some people here were treasured and some were discarded, and that's what you find when you dig and you come to the layer in all of them where you find the great cataclysm that was the storm. It ravaged them all and connected them in ways that are still somewhat mysterious.



the very real government neglect and government policies that so easily give rise to them-that the city wants to be cleansed still of its African-American residents, that it wants to transform itself into a jazz-and-food theme park for the rest of the country. It is still poor. The violent crime rate is double the national average. "In a lot of ways, government continues to fail people, the indigenous culture in particular," he says. "You think about-I mean, dramatic economic disparity, extreme denial of access to capital in terms of creating small business and new wealth, in terms of just employing people from poor neighborhoods, where construction is booming. How do you have an influx of billions of dollars in high-poverty areas and not employ the people in those communities?" And he still sees a neighborhood, or at least the living ghost of one, in the eyes of the people who came back.

Irma Mosley came here to the All Souls Episcopal Church to volunteer. She was born in Charity Hospital, a native of the Lower Nine like her mother and grandmother before her, got out a day before the storm hit. Her niece had a nice four-bedroom house in Baton Rouge. By the time the storm was blowing its worst, there were thirteen adults and twenty children staying in those four bedrooms. Her brother stayed where he was. Later, she learned he had floated away from his house on a mattress and spent the night in a tree. One of her cousins also spent a night in a tree, with a cat. In Baton Rouge, they all watched on TV as their neighborhood flooded and the bodies started floating in the street. One night, Irma was watching

> the news and she saw her mother's house and another one belonging to her aunt. There was a barge floating toward them. "I said, 'That's—it's on top of our auntie's house!" Irma says. "They found thirteen bodies underneath there."

> Some of Irma's family gave up. Her mother went to visit Irma's sister in Seattle that Thanksgiving and never returned. After a while, Irma came back and tried to find her house, but her house wasn't where she had left it. "Well, my house had floated," she explains. "If I'm on Tennessee Street, and you go up the bridge or you



come down or come to where we at now-Caffin and St. Claudemy house was across the street, but you couldn't go straight across. When you get off the bridge, you couldn't turn. It was my house in the middle, and one neighbor on the right, and one neighbor on the left.... You couldn't even get in. You got in, the smell was so bad, you know, you had to wear the masks and all."

She settled into an apartment in Baton Rouge for several years, but she always wanted to come back to her neighborhood. While she was away, Make It Right, a foundation started by actor Brad Pitt, committed itself to building 150 new homes in the Lower Nine. One of them was on Tennessee Street, where Irma Mosley had grown up. "I got me one of them Brad Pitt houses," she says now with a chuckle. "I'm back over there on Tennessee." She got the furniture for her new house by volunteering at a Salvation Army center where they paid her through a kind of impromptu barter system. Irma got paid in furniture.

It's nearly time for the field trip, and the kids are bouncing off the walls. The morning has begun to glower a little over this small, bright place in the battered Lower Nine, where some of the stairs lead nowhere much at all, but where people still try to climb them.

#### **PART TWO** THE STIGMA OF CHARITY

The mosquitoes killed people, over and over again. They killed people in 1853, and in 1867, and in 1878, and finally in 1905. Aedes aegypti, the scientists called it. The Yellow Fever Mosquito. It bred all over town, anywhere there was standing water, which usually was pretty much anywhere, especially in the summer, when apocalyptic thunderstorms roll into New Orleans almost daily. Half the city still got its drinking water from cisterns in which they collected the rain. In 1905, the archbishop died of yellow fever that he probably caught from mosquitoes that had

bred in the cathedral's holy-water font. The afflicted would flood Charity Hospital; in 1905, one hundred patients were treated there and nobody on the staff contracted the disease. There were no mosquitoes in Charity Hospital. It was a safe place to be poor. It was a safe place to be sick. It was a place you could go if you had nowhere else.

It is empty now. Huge and empty and signifying, right there on Tulane Avenue where they dropped the new building with its art deco facade in 1939, yet another of the monuments to the greatness that was Huey Long. It was the sixth hospital in New Orleans to bear the name Charity since the first one was opened in 1736 to care for the city's indigent population. It also was the last. It is too derelict to use and too signifying to tear down. Charity's looming hulk is a place big enough in which to see what came before the storm and what came after it, the good and the bad of history all at the same time. Actually, Charity Hospital is the whole damn story.

"Was it an outdated hospital? Sure. But it had its benefits," says James Moises, an emergency-room doctor who fought to reopen Charity after the storm. "So they had wards full of ten people instead of private rooms. It worked, it wasn't ideal, it was horrible, but if you had no health-care insurance and no place to go, these patients were like, 'I'm just grateful that you did this \$50,000 operation and I got my leg back. I don't care if I'm in a ward. It's either that or lose my leg.' So it wasn't the most modern of hospitals, but it worked and it did what it was supposed to do, which is offer health care to people who needed it without the stigma of 'Okay, you're one of those poor Charity patients, I guess we'll take care of you.' That's what you get in the private sector. Nobody will admit that on record, but ..."

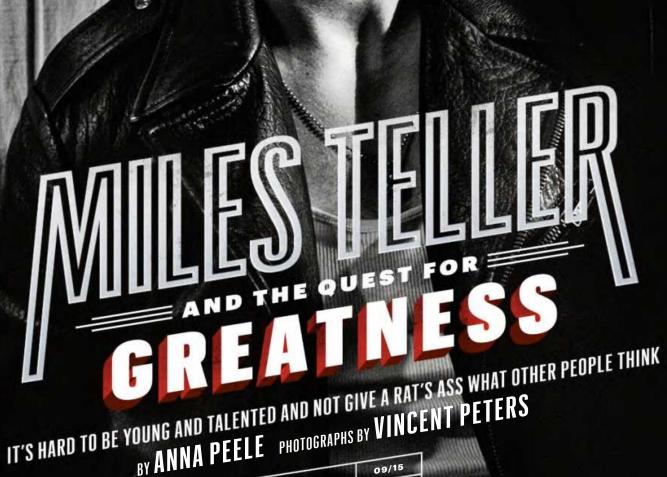
Up the street, not far from Charity, is the brand-new University Medical Center. It does not loom. It spreads greenly over several blocks of what used to be a Lower Mid-City neighborhood, before the storm came and Charity closed and before the people returned to their homes in Lower Mid-City at the invitation of the mayor and the city council and the business com-

> munity, only to then take eminent domain right in the teeth. Two hundred and fifty homes and businesses were razed to clear the footprint for the sprawling and shiny new hospital. Charity remains, unrazed and empty, a ghostly museum to a time when Louisiana had different ideas about the poor, with generations of proof that if we cared for one another we wouldn't always be poor.

> Its bricks and mortar had actually come through remarkably well, considering that Charity had been abandoned by every level of government for most of the storm. Only the basement of the great building had flooded, but that was where all the electrical facilities were, and the power winked out. In the madness that followed, Charity became a mad whirl of improvisation. People siphoned diesel fuel to run generators. They found ways to keep respirators operating. A Marine showed up who knew how to hot-wire a pickup truck, so they had a way to get people to the roof of a parking garage that they used as a triage facility. [continued on page 187]







BY ANNA PEELE PHOTOGRAPHS BY VINCENT PETERS

Esquire PG. 126





OU'RE SITTING ACROSS FROM MILES TELLER AT THE Luminary restaurant in Atlanta and trying to figure out if he's a dick. ¶ You've just told him, by way of making conversation, that according to legend the champagne coupe in your hand is shaped like Marie Antoinette's left breast, and he tells you the highball glass is modeled after his cock. Then he tells the waitress the same thing.

He is wearing a pool-blue V-neck that shows off the Roman-numeral tattoo on his arm, a reference to the thirty-

two-ounce beers his high school friends were forced to buy because forties were not available in Florida. He explains that everyone in the "32 Crew" got this tattoo after a night at the High Octane Saloon from a man they bribed out of bed at 2:00 A.M. to needle crooked X's and I's onto their biceps.

He recounts a direct message he-a twenty-eight-year-old actor still trying to find his place in his profession-sent to five-time NBA champion Kobe Bryant through Twitter: Kobe, watched your Showtime documentary. Really related to what you're talking about and striving for greatness and how it can oftentimes be an isolated journey, and how relationships can be a weakness in a way, if you're really kind of going after it.

He says he wants to contribute to the body of great acting in the world, to the ... shit, he can't find the term—cache? catalog? canon? Whatever, you know what he means. He thinks he has something to offer.

So yeah, he is kind of a dick. But the thing is, you agree with him: His admittedly limited body of work so far, his oeuvre—a word you define and spell for him, so who's the dick now?—is pretty great. His first role, in 2010's Rabbit Hole, was as a tremulous teenager who runs over and kills the son of a couple played by Nicole Kidman and Aaron Eckhart. And his performance in last year's Whiplash, the two-hander about the sexless S&M relationship between a music teacher and his student, won him a lot of attention and a couple tickets to the Oscars. Now he's in the action game, with the Divergent series and this summer's Fantastic Four. Of course, in between there was the stupid, easy, fun spate of movies in which Teller played characters who do things like tell the waitress that highball glasses are based on his dick: 21 & Over, Two Night Stand, Project X, That Awkward Moment. Not all of them were winners, but they allowed him to show his thing, his Tellerian essence, by talking faster and drinking more and seeming to give fewer shits and inhaling more of the oxygen in the room than anyone else.

#### FTER THE WAITRESS LEAVES, SHRUGGING OFF

his comment about the highball glass, you ask him about his hair. He's brought up how nice it is in more than one interview. It's a little defensive, like maybe he's making up for not being the best-looking, or sometimes even the third-best-looking, guy in any given movie he's in. "I was thinking about that today, how I probably think I'm better-looking than the public thinks I am," he says with a laugh, like it's funny that he's willed himself into a higher tier of male beauty through limitless confidence. "I was

in one of these forums about a film I did, and it's like, 'This dude is so ugly! How does he get fucking parts?" 'Well, he's not, like, traditionally handsome, but...' And that's kind of what it is. Maybe it's because I came from a small town, but I always did well for myself."

You take stock. The nose is crooked, the eyelids fleshy, the chin soft, the cheeks mottled with flush. He's right-he has good hair, thick and cowlicked and widow's-peaked. He's tall and solidly muscled, with a nice tan from filming Todd Phillips's big-budget comedy Arms and the Dudes with Jonah Hill in Miami a few months ago. He's appealingly attainable, a good-looking guy who shouldn't know he's good-looking, who should believe the commenters, except that he dates a twenty-two-year-old model/aspiring swimsuit designer/ professional girlfriend who thinks Teller is attractive enough to have permanently monogrammed her perfect ass with his initials.

Then there are the scars—on his chin, his left cheek, incising his neck. He was in an accident in 2007, flung thirty feet from a speeding car on the way home from a jam-band festival. He says the scars are why he doesn't have friends from college.

"My junior-year roommate from NYU was the guy driving my car when we got in the accident. And it was an accident. I never blamed him. I got a lot of laser surgery on my face, like what they use for getting rid of tattoos. Like, very painful. But I never wanted him to feel bad, so I never made anything out of it, ever." He's speaking a little louder and even faster now. The flush creeps up his neck, pinking it, showing the scars a little more. "But I mean, if I was in his position, I'd be like, 'Hey, man, do you need a Gatorade or anything? I'm just running out. You need any meds?' I didn't hold that against him. No big deal. But I was racking up all these medical bills, so we had to sue his insurance because he was driving. It's not like we're suing him; we're suing his insurance. He comes to me. He's like, 'Miles, I don't know if we can be friends when my parents' insurance premiums are going to go up.' I just sat with it for, like, twenty-four hours, and after that I was like, 'Man, fuck you. Like, I've never made you feel bad for this. For you to make me feel guilty and make me feel like you're the victim here, that's really fucked up.'

"And my other friends started living with this kid, and they were just go with the flow," he says, shrugging to show he doesn't give a shit about the conversation that finished his friendships, despite his narrowed eyes and those scars glowing pale against blooddarkened cheeks.

A year later, two of Teller's best friends died in car accidents, five weeks apart. When he was shooting Rabbit Hole right after graduating from college, he had a scene with Kidman in which he apologizes for killing her child. "I was in the hospital when they pulled the plug on my one friend. I knew what it felt like to hug a mother the day she lost her son," he says. Director John Cameron Mitchell told him to think about his friend when he talked to Kidman. Teller says Mitchell told him, "I want you to see your friend Beau."

"I didn't wanna do it," he says. "And I still think you shouldn't use acting as therapy. That was the closest I ever got to that."

Right then a woman comes up to the table. "I'm sorry. I have a really annoying question," she says. "You're Miles Teller?" He nods. "Do you mind if I take a picture with you?"







#### HE WAITRESS DELIVERS THE ENTRÉES,

scallops for him and pork belly for you. The pork looks great and you offer him some. "I'll take a little bit," he says, sawing at it. Then: "I can't cut this." You have to cut his meat for him, a man who ten minutes earlier showed you an iPhone photo of his back muscles to prove how strong he is. He wants you to cut it small. "I don't have back teeth. I literally have four teeth." Not true. He's right, though, this pork belly is really hard

to cut. But still. "What are you, bullying me now?" he says. His goading is a habit, compulsive, almost athletic. "I didn't know they fucking put marble on top of their pork belly."

Then it's back to his oeuvre. Or rather a dissertation on other people's oeuvres and how they might affect the oeuvre of Miles Teller.

He has clearly spent a lot of time thinking about the careers of other actors. He goes into an animated rant about Leo and Bradley and Jake Gyllenhaal and Vince Vaughn, and how it's almost impossible to win an Academy Award as a man under thirty, and Tom Hanks, and Ryan Gosling, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Jeff Bridges, Dustin Hoffman. "But if I'm really homing in on the dramatic performance right now, it's probably Christian Bale or it's Joaq."

Oh, for fuck's sake. Joaq?

"I just said Joaq. Joaquin Phoenix. I don't know him, but my publicist has repped him since he was, like, seventeen. She repped River, too. So I just hear his name."

Okay, the work's important. He says he earned \$5,000 for *Rabbit Hole*, \$7,000 for *The Spectacular Now*, \$8,000 for *Whiplash*—all small independent films. If he wanted to make any kind of living on those movies, he says, he'd have to do ten a year.

Turns out no need. He's in a different realm now. "Reed Richards in *Fantastic Four*, to me, was a huge character departure from, like, *That Awkward Moment* or anything that I'd just done before that," he says, waving off the notion that the appeal of the role was purely financial. "So was *Divergent*."

Of course, he knows that what's next is not always up to him. He was supposed to play the lead in the *Whiplash* follow-up, *La La Land*. He says director Damien Chazelle offered him the part when they were filming *Whiplash*, way before it became an Oscar-winning hit. Teller gets a little nervous telling the story, tearing his dinner roll to shreds and claiming he doesn't know what happened before deciding, whatever, "These are just facts." He explains that he almost passed up the chance to be in *Arms and the Dudes* because it would have conflicted with *La La Land*. "And I got a call from my agent, saying, 'Hey, I just got a call from Lionsgate. Damien told them that he no longer thinks you're creatively right for the project. He's moving on without you.'" So he sent him a text: *What the fuck, bro*?

Is Miles Teller going to let that get him down? Fuck no. He's going to produce his own movies, movies he's not going to get kicked out of, movies like the bank-robbery ensemble piece *The Life and Times of the Stopwatch Gang* and a family drama, *Home Is Burning*. And now he's going to order another beer. Something local.

"I used to get this milk tea in college at the Asian market M2M when I was high," he says, as if you're supposed to know what milk tea is. "It was five bucks. Me and my buddies prided ourselves. We were like, 'Nobody smokes this much pot. I guarantee you can ask anyone in this dorm, man... we smoke *a lot*.' I didn't do a single play when I was in college, because all I wanted to do was smoke pot. I did zero extracurricular activities so I could get high. I stopped when I started doing movies and went to L. A. because I was like, I can't get a phone call and not answer it."

And also because, well, now he's famous. Despite his penchant

for light confrontation, he knows he's always being watched now. A bunch of people in the restaurant looked a second longer than normal when he walked in. He's recognized every day, he says. Like that woman who interrupted the story of the death of his friend with a photo request. A widely circulated TMZ clip from earlier this summer shows Teller at the BottleRock Napa Valley music and wine festival. In the video, he seems to be performing a solo line dance with intricate footwork and purposeful, lawn-crossing, Mick Jagger strutting. There's a shirt toss-and-catch. It's hard not to assume powerful hallucinogens were involved in its choreography.

"I don't give a shit," he says, tough guy. "I can either censor myself or not, and you're always trying to figure it out. It's how you deal with the paparazzi. Do you not do what you would do? Do you live your life with all these filters and censors because everyone has a camera? Or do you fucking dance how you would dance and have people say, 'Oh, he's on drugs'? I was drinking and was at a fucking Brett Dennen fucking concert."

You wonder how much he really doesn't give a shit. Because it kind of seems like no one gives more of a shit about what he does. Enough that, yeah, he has to be kind of a dick about it. How can you not like that?

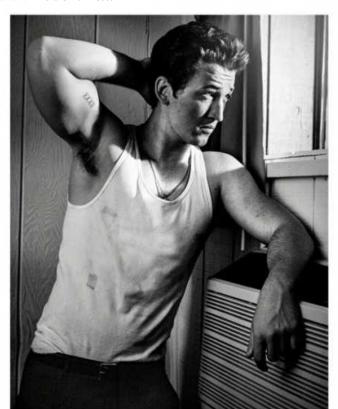
E ORDERS YOU AN UBER. YOU TELL HIM about some recent sexual-assault accusations leveled at the company's drivers, so he tells you he's requesting "Do not rape" service, before he

parses yet another career that isn't the one he

wants. Aaron Eckhart was one of the leads in Rab-

bit Hole, and Teller was so intimidated he could barely get through his first scene with him. But recently, he worked with him again, in the boxing movie *Bleed for This*. "Now in *Bleed for This* he's my trainer, the overweight, kind of supporting character actor. He idolizes actors like Sean Penn and Jack Nicholson, but he's just very antipaparazzi," Teller says. "It's hard to get to the right position, to be somebody who is commercially successful and critically acclaimed. That's the sweet spot."

He gives you a hug and goes off to contribute to the cache or catalog or canon or whatever the fuck you call it and charm the world with his dickishness.





# Why FASHION What FASHION

An epic photo portfolio featuring ten singular men, each photographed in two distinct ways by two distinctive photographers, who show us the essential differences between fashion and style. But first, an explanation of terms...

FASHION PORTFOLIO BY MATTHIAS VRIENS-MCGRATH
STYLE PORTFOLIO BY DAVID GOLDMAN



Highlights from the new fall-winter collections of Bottega Veneta, Gucci, Versace, Dries Van Noten, Louis Vuitton, Dolce & Gabbana, Saint Laurent, and Burberry Prorsum.

# STYLE Matters Means

**FASHION [FIG. 1] AND STYLE [FIG. 2]** are not the same thing. Everyone knows that. And there are enough old saws about the difference between the two to stock a Home Depot, most of which boil down to: fashion bad, style good. But this is not always so. For starters: Fashion is a force for good. Yes, it can be fickle and fleeting and fraught with peril, but it is also the reason we're not all dressed like our grandfathers. Fashion empowers us to adapt and refresh, to evolve and move on, in everything from the proportions and patterns of our clothes to the cuts and constructions. And if we choose to embrace a particular designer's latest vision of how a man ought to look right now—if we risk appearing fashionable, like the men photographed on the "fashion" pages of the following portfolio—we stand to lose only if we

This brings us to style, that alloy of taste and habit that is timeless and authentic and wholly unique to each man. But too much style on its own can be bad. It can leave us ossified and petrified of change; it can trap us in the past, our collars too wide and our trousers too baggy, so convinced of our own sense of rightness that we might just miss the wrongness of what we're wearing. For style to succeed—for it to thrive through the singularity of its combinations and the superiority of its own craftsmanship—it needs to belong in the present moment. It needs a little help from fashion.

They're different, fashion and style, but they're far more interconnected than most of us know. Fashion without style can be reckless. Style without fashion can be irrelevant. For a man to dress well, for a man to look his very best, he needs to embrace not one or the other but both.



Highlights from the everyday lives of notable men.











- Silk-blend jacket (\$3,975), cotton shirt (\$375), and silk brocade trousers (part of three-piece suit, \$4,495) by Dolce & Gabbana; leather shoes (\$770) by Dries Van Noten; steel Complication Rotande de Cartier chronograph (\$9,050) by Cartier.
- Three-button wool coat (price available upon request) and leather bomber jacket (\$5,850) by Salvatore Ferragamo; cotton sweatshirt (\$885) by Brunello Cucinelli; jeans by Heibon Jeans.











# 2015 ESQ. HOW WE DRESS NOW

My quest for comfort and class in a dead synthetic world

BY NICK TOSCHES

Photographs by Sante D'Orazio



I HEAR OF THE FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE, the fabric of society, the fabric of this and of that. The only fabric that means a thing is the fabric of my underwear.

And right now the fabric of my underwear faces uncertainty. Zimmerli of Switzerland has been bought by a venture-capital group, and the thirty-two Richelieu Rib undershirts that were turned out each day, and the Richelieu Rib boxer-briefs, are to be no more. Remaining stock is in the possession of Alexander Kabbaz, purveyor of my socks and underwear. I've been trying to buy out all the Richelieu Rib underwear that fits me, but it's not a cheap quest.

Maybe the nice lady who offers custom-made guayaberas at Dos Carolinas in San Antonio thinks I'm crazy. I can't see or feel the fabric. I want to know if the Sea Island cotton is certified, spun in Italy or Switzerland, and, if so, by which mill.

If she does think I'm crazy, she's probably right. But how'd I get this way? It goes something like this.

Nineteen sixty-two. Eighth grade, P.S. 24, Jersey City. From the radio, a gravelly voice from somewhere beyond the ultima Thule of cool, slow-rapping about some guy named Bobo:

...and, Jack, he really knows how to dress.

He wears nothing but the best at no times that money can buy.... Jack, that cat was clean.

He used to change his vines at least seven times a day.... *Like*, one vine alone would cost the cat three grand....

And the shirts he wore cost a grand apiece, handmade.... And what he used to wear with 'em was a pair of silk slacks cost him seven bills....

More than thirty years pass before I hear it again: "Jack, That Cat Was Clean," by Dr. Horse. By then the damage is done.

Because that cat would be clean, Clean, clean, clean—ooo-wee—that cat would be clean.

It was about cool in those days. Thin iridescent black tie, black no-lapel "continental" jacket, "toreador" pants. What little money was allotted my clothes I did my best to direct to a Journal Square store specializing less in men's wear than in punkwear. Parents didn't like its cut-rate-cool schmattes, but liked its prices.

Nineteen-seventy. After rent, food, and fucking around, my weekly \$125 salary at Lovable Underwear affords me little disposable income. My wardrobe consists of a pair of black Levi's, a black cotton-polyester Western shirt with white piping, a brightred double-knit polyester sport jacket, a souvenir-shop string tie with a slide clasp of a scorpion embedded in Lucite. I quit my job. The wardrobe goes to hell.

I'm a classy guy trapped in the clothes of a person that kills small animals. I'm not cool, no longer want to be. William Powell is dead, buried somewhere in me.

Nineteen eighty-five. Voghera, Italy. I'm interviewing Michele Sindona at the prison here. I never knew him before his imprisonment, but I'd seen pictures of him in his perfectly tailored suits. His tailor was Mario Caraceni, whose shop Sindona called by the old name of Donnini e Caraceni.

In Milan I make my way to the Caraceni sartoria. Women are busy with cloth, thread, sewing pins. I ask one if Signor Donnini is about. "Uscita," she hisses through teeth that hold pins.

Thinking she means he's left for lunch, I ask when he'll be back.

The pins in her mouth dance as she cackles.

Turns out he's really left. Dead. I withdraw from there. The vision of myself in a Caraceni suit withdraws from me.

An inchoate awareness of the difference between fashion, style, and class is immanent, not far from where William Powell rests.

Fashion is the collective salivary reflex of the witless whelps of Pavlovian consumerism. A fashionable man is a hollow man, as foolish as he looks, scurrying about at the cutting edge of mediocrity, victim and carrier of the modish blight.

Style is the cultivation of a look, an air. A man's style reflects how he should like to be perceived by others, and by himself. It evinces, and emanates from, not what he is but what he wishes he were. Style is pretense, camouflage. Often it affects disdain for affectation: a fastidious, painstaking nonchalance that would put forward a natural uncaring for the passing judgments of others, a mien of inner security and casual calm. Henry James writes of an "aesthetic toggery, which was conventionally unconventional... a tortuous spontaneity."

Before he could write poetry, Ezra Pound did his misguided best to look like he could. Ford Madox Ford described the future author of the words "Pull down thy vanity" in 1909: "He wore a purple hat, a green shirt, a black velvet coat, vermilion socks, openwork, brilliant tanned sandals... and trousers of green billiard cloth, in addition to an immense flowing tie that had been hand-painted by a Japanese Futurist poet."

Style is abnormal psychology. It's far more subtly complex an aberration than fashion, but if you can read the style, you can read the man.

Class has nothing to do with fashion or style. To converse with a pork chop and shun the company of hoi polloi. In the rare gentleman of whom this is true, there is class.

The attire of a man of class is selected and worn for comfort alone. If he dresses comfortably, he'll be well dressed, for the most comfortable of fabrics make for the finest of clothes.

I ask my tailor, Leonard Logsdail, about this. He agrees that a man should dress primarily for comfort.

"But most men don't," he says.

Born in the East End of London in 1950, son of a horse-andcart milkman, Leonard has been making suits for more than fortythree years. He's gotten to know many of his clients well.

"Do they dress to impress others?"

"No. They dress to impress themselves."

"What about you?"

"Vanity."

His own favorite suit seems to belie this. Having brought it to work for a pressing, he fetches it and shows it to me. He holds the seat of the trousers to the light, and softly, diffusely, the light comes through the cloth. Some beautifully comfortable britches, all right. The suit's a blue-white pinstripe of Ariston super-130. Ariston of Italy, Scabal of Belgium, Dormeuil of England: These are the makers of suiting fabrics he esteems. The mill Scabal uses goes back to 1539, Ariston goes back to 1930. It's the quality, not the pedigree, unless you're talking about the animal the fleece came from.

I've known Leonard a few years. After my fiasco in Milan, it's a long time until I have the money and nerve, simultaneously, to dare again. I learn that Dormeuil produces fabric of pashmina, a fifty-fifty blend of silk and pashmina from the soft underfur of goats that roam the Ladakh highlands north of the Himalayas. It's said Dormeuil's pashmina is the finest suiting fabric in the world.

At the office of Luke Mayes, the Dormeuil sales manager for North America, I pore over samples of available pashmina patterns. I've spent weeks researching pashmina. I don't want to

## My conspirators know what most have never known: The idea of comfort is absurd if one sentences himself to a life in an ill-fitting second skin of scratchy, toxic Chinese shit.



 $seem\,an\,ignorant\,sucker.\,A\,sucker\,may be, but\,not\,an\,ignorant\,one.$ 

I lay out a few grand for enough midnight-blue shadow-stripe pashmina to provide for a suit. I ask Luke if he knows a tailor in New York to be trusted with this stuff.

"When I first began making shirts back in the 1970s, there were about sixty true bespoke shirtmakers in Manhattan. Still in my early thirties, I was the youngest. As time passed, they all ended up closing," Alexander Kabbaz recalls.

I phrase it differently when I ask him: "Do you feel a man should dress for comfort above all else?"

"Without question," he says, "comfort rules."

Can a fabric be too comfortable? Shirtmakers advise against seduction by shirtings with yarn counts of over 200. These are said to be so delicate that shirts made of them won't endure wearings and washings. "They're simply too thin," says Alexander.

I ask Eugene Athanasatos, who came to work with his dad, Mike, at Geneva, one of the last custom-shirt houses, what kind of guy wears such shirts.

"The kind of guy who drives a Bentley," he says.

But I'm already seduced and won't be swayed.

The finest, most comfortable shirting fabrics are Sea Island and Egyptian cotton. The eminent producers of these fabrics are Albini of Italy and Alumo of Switzerland. I alternate between the two.

The best Sea Island cotton comes from Barbados and Jamaica. The best grade of Egyptian cotton is classified as Giza 45. Supplies are extremely limited. Markus Heller, managing director of Alumo, says that Alumo's Sea Island 120 fabric costs nearly twice as much as a 120 fabric of Egyptian cotton. "Low-price offers in Sea Island quality bear the risk of false declaration," he warns. But Giza 45, the very best cotton in the world, is most elusive and costly of all.

I sit here with sumptuous presentation-boxed swatch books that have higher production standards than books from major publishers. The most lavish of them is called The Diamonds.

When I asked for these books, Alberto Pallante responded: "These are the most exclusive products we have. Can you please tell me what kind of business you run and how you saw these products?"

Sometimes it pays to be a fucking genius. I heard from Alberto again: "Will be an honor to send you the books, I look online at some of the work you have done, and loved it."

Alberto offers a gloss: "These are literally unique pieces, available to very, very few makers. The fabric produced is so little, and the price so prohibitive, that only a handful of people end up wearing these shirts."

Giza 45 330's? Seduced ain't the word.

Without Alexander, I'd have no underwear, socks, custom-made hand-turned silk-strap braces with calfskin fittings so I'll never again hitch or shift the waistband of my britches. (Leonard doesn't even put belt loops on my trousers anymore.) But I've never called on his shirtmaking skills. I know he's more expensive than other shirtmakers. I know he's passionate about his shirts.

In "A Treatise on the Art of Making Fine Custom Shirts" (2003), he took aim at a rich client who forwent proper care of them: "Treat my shirts—and I—with the dignity they deserve. Don't, Mr. Wynn, espouse that you prefer not to wear laundered shirts, wear mine once each, and then throw them away—even if you grace my pocket by purchasing 200 shirts annually. Those are my children you are murdering."

Alex will be here, with tape measure, next week. Luke has sent new pashmina swatches to Len. I've converted an old broom closet to a new shirt closet. Bobo would be proud.

They're beautiful cats, each in his way, the conspirators in my pursuit of comfort and class; and I love them all, and what they represent in this dead synthetic world. They are the ones who have helped me know what most have never known, and will never know: The idea of a comfortable home, a comfortable car, a comfortable, ahem, lifestyle—these are absurdities if one sentences himself to a life in an ill-fitting second skin of suffocating, scratchy, ugly, toxic Chinese shit.

I could go on. Haven't even mentioned my shoes. SAS. But the eighth-grade boy, the bold young man in red polyester, they were strong and vibrant. The old man they became is frail and wretched. It's time for him to micturate. There are stains enough on these fine, fine, ooo-wee underbritches. Again it comes down to what really matters: my underwear. 12

Nick Tosches's latest novel is Under Tiberius.



# THE LIFE CYCLE OF A TREND

How the pocket square went from nowhere to somewhere to everywhere (and not quite back again)

BY JOSHUA DAVID STEIN

IT USUALLY GOES something like this: We'll notice it first on a stranger on the street, or a friend from work, or a movie star or sports hero on a screen large or small. It's a tie bar. It's a fedora, a gingham shirt, a velvet blazer. An insignificant detail, yet we notice it anyway. And once we notice, we'll start seeing it more and more often on men who don't look terrible wearing it. We'll see what it's doing for whoever's wearing it-namely, unlumping him from the rest of us-and either we'll choose to ignore it (not us) or





we'll see it in a store or on a Web site and think: Why not us? It'll feel strange the first time we wear it, but over time it'll feel natural before eventually feeling inevitable. Then we'll start wearing it less and less, deliberately or just because, until we stop wearing it altogether. Wear will eventually become wore, and one day we'll come across pictures of ourselves in it and we'll think, a little sheepish, Christ!

It was a trend, and trends never last forever.

"HOW DID THE pocket square become a trend?" asks the legendary sixtyfive-year-old designer Joseph Abboud. "It's not a trend. A pocket square is an iconic piece of men's wear that has always finished a garment." He has a point, to a point. The pocket square, often cotton but sometimes silk, often patterned but just as often plain, has been part of a man's wardrobe since the days of Richard II. In earlier times, it was called other names, was tucked into different garments, meant something else. And for men of a certain age, like Abboud, who built his namesake brand in the 1980s and '90s on the back of Neapolitan-accented suits and is now chief creative director of Men's Wearhouse, it has been a constant companion, never out of style and therefore never in style. And yet most American men do not dress with the care and consideration and high Sinatraism of Joseph Abboud. Not too long ago, most men wouldn't have been caught dead in a pocket square. And then, well...

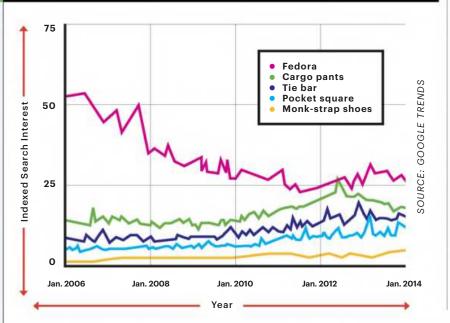
"Whenever there's a trend, we have a desire to see a patient zero," says Jonah Berger, a professor of marketing at the Wharton School and author of the New York Times best seller Contagious: Why Things Catch On. "But individuals are often less important than we might think." Instead, a trend requires suitable conditions to thrive: Before there could be any pocket squares, there had to be pockets in which to put them. The late 1990s and early aughts caught the tail end of the chino wasteland that was business casual. Beginning roughly in 2003, a sizable number of men decided to start dressing up again. (The collapse of Web 1.0 and the recession of 2001 turned many professionals off the "oppositional cool" of dotcom culture, so they repaired to higher sartorial ground.) Sales of men's tailored clothing jumped 23.7 percent from 2003 to 2004, setting off a decade of year-onyear growth and coinciding with when Google Trends started tracking a rise in searches for "pocket square." Ariele Elia, cocurator of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology's 2013 exhibit Trend-ology, frames this as the pocket square's incubation period. "Trends don't come out of thin air," she says. "And even though the earliest adopters account for just 2.5 percent of those who'll eventually participate in the trend, they are among the most influential."

The earliest adopters weren't forced to start wearing suits again by some professional or social imperative-they opted to wear them, and with options come opportunities to personalize. And that's where the pocket square came in. In 2004, at stores like Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys, the pocket square started doing a brisk trade while the men's market, responding to the strident displays of peacockery, raced to feed the best. (Both Tom Ford and Thom Browne launched men'swear lines in the mid-aughts with pocket squares a-go-go.) In magazines, newspapers, and, beginning in 2005 with Scott Schuman's The Sartorialist, the nascent world of street-style blogs, the pocket square reemerged from obscurity. (The first post to appear on The Sartorialist was, of course, of a man wearing a pocket square. So was the second.) Cathy Horyn, writing in The New York Times in 2005, dubbed these early adopters "the new peacocks" and commented on "those little pocket square things that you see so many men sporting but can never master." Speaking to the Times around that period, Michael Bastian, then the men's fashion director at Bergdorf Goodman, noticed that more and more of his customers were forgoing ties altogether in favor of a pocket square in toto, and he issued an edict as fashion people do: "Now that guys don't have to wear ties, the pocket square has become the new tie."

"In order for a trend to function," explains Steven Quartz, coauthor of Cool: How the Brain's Hidden Quest for Cool Drives Our Economy and Shapes Our World, "others need to be able to understand the inconspicuous signals it sends. If the signal is not understood by those you wish to understand it, the trend won't succeed." In other words, trends are language-or just noise if no one speaks it. For the first few years after the pocket square's reemergence in 2003, it was confined to the relatively moneyed, relatively few passing signals among themselves. To the rest of us, it was all just so much noise, such that when a new television show premiered in 2007 on a cable network that nobody watched, the show's costume designer, Janie Bryant, outfitted her hero in a pocket square despite her sense that "everyone thought pocket squares were just for grandpas."

**SIXTY-FIVE SECONDS** into the second episode of Mad Men, with 1.04 million people watching, a neatly folded white

#### A Brief History of Twenty-first Century Trends BASED ON WHO'S BEEN LOOKING FOR WHAT ON GOOGLE SINCE 2006



cotton pocket square appeared in a slategray suit beneath the chiseled jaw of Don Draper. What happened next was a prime example of what Quartz calls the status instinct, in which "those belonging to lower status groups emulate those of higher status and seek to raise their own status through emulation." With three million viewers tuning in every week and Mad Men quickly ascending into the firmament of the Golden Age of Television, "every man wants to be Don," says Bryant. "They want to dress like him, eat like him, be with women like him." And the answer was right there in his jacket pocket, at once familiar and foreign.

"Trends are a social act," explains Berger. "And men wore the pocket square because it signaled membership in a desirable group." Starting around 2007, that group happened to be the men of Sterling Cooper. This was when sales of pocket squares peaked at Barneys; it's when the pocket square started to make regular, unremarkable appearances on red carpets and award shows (its unremarkableness a sign of its increasing regularity); it's when it reemerged on James Bond's person (in Quantum of Solace) after a decade of mostly languishing in his top lefthand dresser drawer. Retailers of every size and most sensibilities either introduced them on their shelves or ramped up their offerings to meet the demand of the early majority, the 34 percent of trend adopters who hop on the bandwagon while the wagon is still accelerating. It then caught on with the late majority (34 percent of trend participants) and the late adopters (16 percent), and by 2010 the pocket square had gone fully mainstream.

Cue the following from a writer at this very periodical: "The fizzle and pop of a pocket square has gone flat, and the surest way a man can show his independentmindedness—the very thing that he once did with a pocket square—is to go without one altogether." This happens with every trend: As soon as it approaches ubiquity, as soon as it conveys I follow rather than I lead, it becomes anothema to the in crowd who adopted it. "High-status consumers introduce a new taste, people of lower status emulate them," Quartz writes in Cool. "Higher-status people then abandon the taste because it's become popular among the lower status, and the next cycle of imitation-abandonment begins." All trends must die, valar morghulis.

However, something and a whole lot of someones came along to dis-

#### THE RISE AND FALL OF THE POCKET SQUARE (ACCORDING TO ESQUIRE)



March 2005

No pocket square







Pocket square





March 2013 Pocket square

April 2015 No pocket square

rupt the natural death of the pocketsquare trend: Tumblr, the blogging platform and social network that fueled an explosion in street-style coverage that often came marked with a simple hashtag: #menswear. Whereas earlier style blogs, like Schuman's, were tightly controlled cults of personality, Tumblr's anything-goes functionality opened the floodgates for pictures of an impeccably groomed gentleman with a soft-shouldered blazer, perhaps a scarf artfully draped underneath, double-monk-strap loafers on his feet, and an erupting piece of cloth in his pocket. The #menswear man was frequently photographed at fashion-industry events, none more prominent than Pitti Uomo, a biannual convention that retailers and designers have attended with relatively little scrutiny since 1972. Once the modern-day Robert Franks showed up and started posting their photographs on Tumblr, the early adopters who'd been thisclose to giving up the pocket square were back on the horse. "As soon as the Pitti look became street fashion," explains Lawrence Schlossman, the editor in chief of men's-wear blog Four Pins and cocreator of Fuck Yeah Menswear, a seminal Tumblr feed from the time, "the pocket square exploded."

As editors, buyers, and bloggers converged in Florence, gazing at one another in the convention center, pocket square begat pocket square. Perhaps the transmission would have ended there, but Pitti was and still is a working trade show, in which tastes are gauged and purchase orders placed. It was the finger on the scale in favor of pocket squares. After all, says Bastian, formerly of Bergdorf, "as a buyer, one of your jobs is to know what is going on online and keep that in mind when deciding what to put on the floor." So the

pocket square issued forth from Florence to stores across America, again.

But abandonment, once deferred, could not be deterred indefinitely, at least among the high status. In 2012, Billy Reid, the Alabama-based designer who once boasted a collection of squares fivehundred-some-odd strong, stopped wearing his. "I don't know why I stopped," he admits now. "Probably because they were so popular in my shop." Schlossman decided to forgo his, too. "One day I just didn't feel like putting on all that stuff. It just felt over," he says. "The fucked-up thing is you have these guys being told their Red Wings or their dub monks or their pocket squares are classics that will never go out of style. But of course they will. Everything does."

No trend lasts forever. But before we write the obituary of pocket squares and dab our tears with ... well, what exactly? consider this: They have never been more popular with mass retailers. Men's Wearhouse saw a 50 percent increase in sales of pocket squares in the past five vears, even after seeing declines in fashion-forward markets like California and New York. And Jorge Valls, men's fashion director at Nordstrom, says, "Pocket squares have been growing for us in the past couple of seasons." It took twelve years, but pocket squares have become a permanent part of the American vernacular-beyond trending and beyond the reproach of those who purport to traffic in them. "We've cycled through minimalism and athleisure and who knows what else [since pocket squares]," says Schlossman. "Now Kanye wears something, it gets posted on Instagram, and it's a trend for two months." Which is all good for Mr. West. For the rest of us, we have pocket squares to wear as we see fit, and that is enough. 12

#### A GREAT DAY IN MEN'S WEAR

Photograph by Jason Bell

Pg. **152**  September 2015

**RALPH LAUREN STARTED** out selling ties from a drawer. Calvin Klein began with an idea for women's coats. Michael Kors was a part-time window dresser. For each man to get where he was going, there were gatekeepers and tastemakers, moneymen and middlemen, all of whom wanted a cut and/or some credit for their respective roles in making the designing, creating, and selling of clothes really, really hard. It's still hard today. It remains a grind. But thanks to a once-in-a-generation confluence of factors-low, low interest rates for seed capital; new manufacturing models that bypass middlemen; direct paths to consumers through e-commerce and social media; and a surge in demand as men stock their closets as never before-a new generation of men'swear leaders has emerged to show us new ways of buying and wearing clothes. Some are designers with bold and insistent visions for how men today should dress. Some are entrepreneurs with novel ideas about supply chains and retail models. Some are simply guys who didn't like the job they had before and couldn't quit wondering why khakis didn't fit better or why dress shoes had to be so damn expensive. Together they're the future, and they'll be helping men look their best in the years and decades to come.



[1] Shimon and [2] Ariel Ovadia of Ovadia & Sons (est. 2010). [3] Ryan Babenzien of Greats (est. 2013). [4] Lane Gerson and [5] Ariel Nelson of Jack Erwin

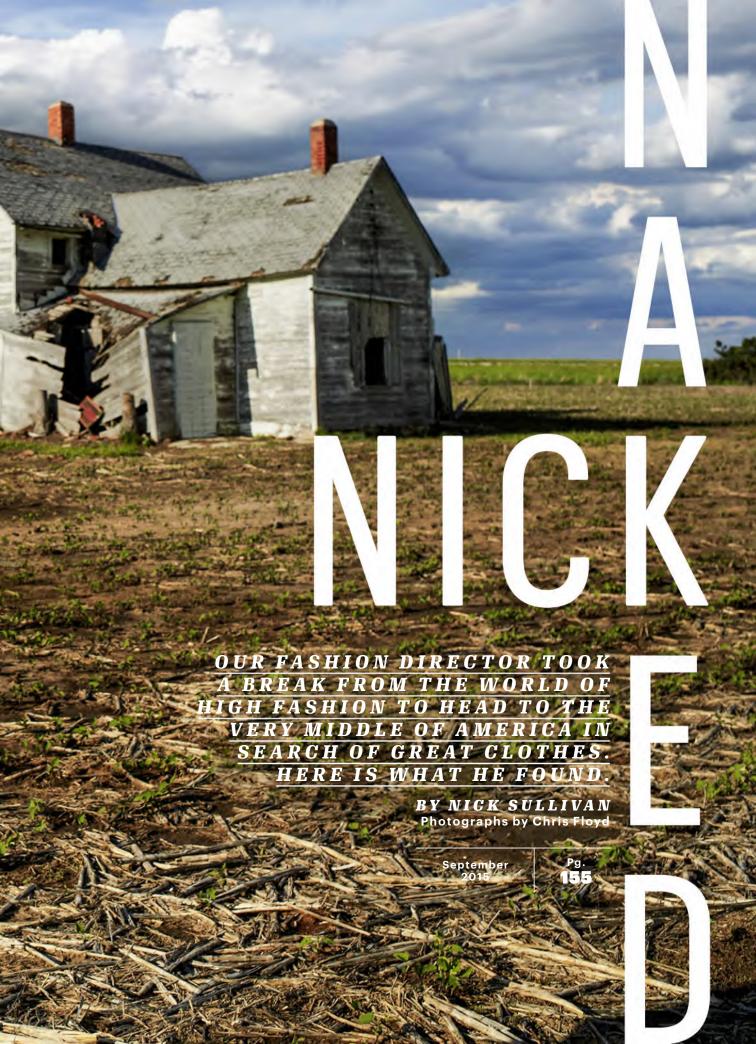
(est. 2013). [6] Josh Reed and [7] Trey Alligood of Gents (est. 2013). [8] Raan and [9] Shea Parton of Apolis (est. 2004). [10] Dave Gilboa of Warby



Parker (est. 2010). [11] Morgan Collett, [12] Colin Tunstall, and [13] Josh Rosen of Saturdays NYC (est. 2009). [14] Matt Baldwin of Baldwin Denim and Collection (est. 2009). [15] Andy Dunn of Bonobos (est. 2007). [16] Maxwell Osborne and [17] Dao-Yi Chow of Public School (est. 2008). [18] Todd

Snyder of Todd Snyder (est. 2011). [19] Sam and [20] Liam Fayed of Bespoken (est. 2008) with [21] brother James of Turnbull & Asser (est. 1885).











**AS A RULE, PEOPLE DON'T CELEBRATE** the middle of things. They celebrate the edges, the beginnings and the ends: births, christenings, marriages, graduations. Even death carries with it a stronger sense of occasion than any bit in the middle. Just outside Lebanon, Kansas, is the absolute middle: a small rise in the generally flat local topography that is the acknowledged center of the forty-eight contiguous states, the farthest point as the crow flies from all this nation's coasts and borders. A great place to go shopping.

It was a terrible idea on paper. Drop me (me!) into the middle of nowhere to find stylish clothes on a budget. There was, however, a scientifical purpose to this wild-goose chase: Most of us are spoiled for choice. Any reasonably sized town has a Gap or a JCPenney within striking distance, to say nothing of the myriad conveniences of the Interwebs. Yet away from urban centers, with their multiple malls and infinite choices for any budget, I wanted to find out what a resourceful style hound might turn up by shopping local. I brought only the clothes on my back (which, for as much as I usually pack for a trip, effectively rendered me naked) and gave myself two full days and \$200 to find two outfits, something a bit dressed-up—a suit or maybe a blazer, shirt, and tie—as well as a casual outfit. I would rely on Internet searches and local recommendations, provided that I could find some people to ask. Lebanon is a town of 212 souls, many of them farmers, and like several others in the region, its population is dwindling. (The

2000 census numbered its population at 303, with many of the farms winding down as Big Agro squeezes them out.) There is no hotel in Lebanon and, as luck would have it, no shops at which one could actually shop.

First, I expanded my area of concern to the hundred-mile radius around Lebanon, give or take—no one should have to drive more than a couple hours to buy a new pair of jeans or some decent shoes—and I started with a recommendation I picked up at a gas station in a small town called Newton. I'd asked the kid behind the counter where I should shop for clothes hereabouts, and the young man, wearing an oversized T-shirt, was stumped. "Better off heading to Kansas City," he said. "Pretty much nothing between here and there." As I swung the door open to leave, he had a second thought and yelled after me, "You might find something in Junction City, though. There's Fort Riley there."

Fort Riley, I learned through a Web search, is an enormous Army base and the home of the Big Red One, the 1st Infantry Division. Army towns usually mean Army surplus stores, and that was very good news for a vintage sleuth such as myself. Military clothing forms the basis of most of what we recognize as casual men's clothes, from chinos to trench coats, from cargo pants to leather jackets. By necessity, military clothing is designed to do a job and do it repeatedly, and this functionality explains why countless men's-wear designers refer to and draw from old-school militaria in their collections.





>CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: THE AUTHOR IN HIS RAM PICKUP TRUCK; HIS FAVORITE PURCHASE, A VINTAGE M-65 FIELD JACKET; SCENES FROM HIS HUNT FOR JEANS, SHIRTS, AND BOOTS; THE AUTHOR SHOWING OFF HIS NEW "COWBOY CUT" JEANS OUTSIDE ORSCHELN FARM & HOME; A MAP OF THE GREATER LEBANON AREA TRACING HIS DRIVING ROUTE.





All of which is to say that anyone looking for steals and deals in out-of-the-way places would do well to start with Army surplus stores. Once in Junction City, I headed to the quaint-sounding Olde-N-Nu Shoppe, an unlikely combination of surplus store and bakery. A warren of small rooms that smelled pleasingly of doughnuts was chock-full of nearly new desert-ready uniforms. This was great for other customers, all of them dressed in head-to-toe camo, but I was looking for older, more street-friendly camo. Before leaving to shop elsewhere, I grabbed a spectacular khaki nylon unlined trench coat of ancient military issue for \$9.99; it was dated 1951 on a label inside, yet it looked worthy of Helmut Lang. Checkout was in the bakery, where the lady behind the desk took my dollars, asked what on earth I was doing in Kansas, and asked for my autograph, the first and probably last time this will ever happen to me.

I did rather better a mile away at Military Outlet, a somewhat more polished operation. There were different types of camo, and I turned up a gem: a well-worn M-65 field jacket, likely of late—Vietnam War issue. Age and use had weathered the densely woven cotton to a pleasing softness that stood in stark contrast to the newer versions that hung beside it. (With Army surplus, older is usually better. Vintage uniforms tended to be made of better-quality cotton that was never blended with man-made fibers like polyester, as they are increasingly today.) You can find a hundred brands, from Gap to Gucci, that do their own versions

of the iconic M-65, and some charge into the four figures. Mine cost just \$19.99, and it was real. Bingo.

Greatly encouraged by this early triumph, I sped forth. Several towns whipped into the rearview mirror without coughing up anything of note, and as the sun began to set, I chalked up the first day to a win thanks to my military discoveries. With nowhere to stay in Lebanon itself, my photographer, Chris Floyd, and I finished up the day by heading west to the relatively bright lights of Phillipsburg, where we settled into our hotel before hitting up the Horseshoe Sports Bar. The place was empty except for the owners, Darrell and Lynn Tracy, who seemed genuinely delighted to discuss the particulars of shopping with two thirsty Englishmen. Darrell, wearing bib overalls, a denim shirt, a trucker cap, and a flowing white beard, had worked in oil fields in Texas and driven eighteen-wheelers loaded with pigs all over the central states. After stroking his beard in thought, he suggested we head to Orscheln Farm & Home on the edge of town for boots, jeans, and shirts. "But where could I buy a suit?" I wondered aloud. "Denver," he said, only half-joking. "Every town used to have stores that sold things like that back when people dressed like that. They've all gone."

The first in the door at Orscheln Farm & Home the next morning, I got to work. Orscheln has something like 167 stores in the Midwest where you can buy drainage pipes and Wranglers, cowboy hats and live baby chickens. Perusing shelves and shelves of jeans, I tried on quite a few pairs before realizing that pants,



even the ones in my size, just fit differently here. Everything felt about eight feet wide, and it wasn't because people were bigger (not from what I could tell) but rather because men needed more room so they could actually move around. What I thought of as a proper fit simply didn't suit their daily needs, and a store that caters principally to farmers and their families would no sooner stock close-fitting jeans than it would surfboards. The two pairs that looked best on me—one was a very dark, very stiff pair from Wrangler in the brand's original Cowboy Cut; the other, from Ely Cattleman, was lighter in color and softer to the touch thanks to some apparent enzyme-washing-were looser than anything I would find at home, so I loosened up and sprang for the Wranglers. There were also racks of shirts, western-style and otherwise, but there was a flimsiness to the cotton that led me to hope I'd have better luck elsewhere.

If scientists could take a core sample of the state of the American chino from the past two decades, they couldn't gather richer data from anywhere else than along the racks of the Hays, Kansas, branch of Goodwill. This is where a lot of local people do their shopping, not just because of the fine value proposition most items were priced at \$4.49—but because there is so much variety in chinos as well as in dress and casual shirts. I pulled out about fifteen pairs of chinos in my size and headed for the changing room, pausing only to grab a pair of work boots.

With my evolved view of fit, I found a few pairs of chinos that worked-they were still quite big, but they were big in a way that a good tailor could fix. (Double pleats and foot-long flies are hard to have adjusted, but roomy cuts on legs can be remedied.) The boots, meanwhile, provided a pleasing alternative to the square-toed shoes that I'd seen offered at other stores yet were noticeably absent from the local population's feet. This is boots country, and these boots were suitably retro, all supple leather and robust, barely eroded lug soles. Everyone in the parking lot was wearing boots of this kind, the footwear equivalent of the truck that everyone seemed to drive, and they were relatively



>ABOVE: THE AUTHOR TRYING ON ONE OF THE FEW BLAZERS HE COULD FIND THAT (SORT OF) FIT. LEFT: ALL NEW (USED) CASUAL CLOTHING

expensive-at \$24.99, roughly five times as much as the clothes. In a region where so many work on their feet all day, the boots were the most important investment one could make.

With the second day nearly over, my casual bases covered,

and time running out, I turned to dressing up. This would be a challenge, because as Darrell had told me the night before, there was rarely any need for suits (or dress shoes, for that matter) in a place where most people didn't wear them. Still: People need to go to funerals and traffic court, and the suiting section at Goodwill held two dozen blazers and suits, many of them with flared trousers and other assorted deal-breakers. I wanted to like the suit labeled Levi's Action Suit, but alas, I could not. Eventually I found a secondhand navy cotton blazer (JCPenney) that looked relatively current, unlined and cut in that short style beloved by the Italians right now. To go with it, there was a washed oxford cotton buttondown shirt (also from JCPenney). Together they ran \$8.98, and when worn with a pair of my new chinos (pressed, of course, in a nod to formality, and another \$4.49), they would do the trick.

Two strong outfits, for under \$200, in two days: Mission accomplished. And pending a trip to my tailor back home to adjust some of the sizing, I planned on wearing these new purchases whenever and wherever I could. I had arrived in Kansas with typical city-slicker misconceptions, one of which was that there would be fewer choices. That was not exactly the case. There were plenty of choices-they were simply different choices from what I was used to, and they were informed by different perceptions of how a man should live and what he truly needs. In fashion, we talk about Americana as the soul of American workwear, and the Americana familiar to me, the kind I see in fashion magazines and on runways (all perfectly tailored western shirts and snug denim and luxurious shearling coats), is a romantic and expensive facsimile filtered through just about everywhere but the actual heartland of America. What I found in Kansas was a far more practical and accessible version of Americana than that urban, urbane variety we can buy anytime we like at J. Crew. Americana is comfortable clothing in no-frills, honest-to-goodness cloth. Americana is taste governed by function and economy. Americana is strong, sturdy, ass-kicking boots that nobody will appreciate or notice except the person wearing them. Americana is what you find when you spend a few days and a few hundred bucks in the middle of the forty-eight contiguous states, and the people who live and work there wear it very well. 19

# FIFTY MEN LOOKING THEIR BEST

We approached fifty men from all walks of life and all different parts of the country and asked each of them a simple question: What do you wear when you want to look your best? Here and over the following pages, they share their answers, and from confidence-boosting suits to comfortable jeans, their definitions of what it means to look their best prove there's no one way to think about style.

#### **ANDRÉ L. CHURCHWELL, 61**

Professor of medicine, Nashville

"It probably took me twenty years to figure out what cut of jacket looks right for me, what the length of the jacket should be, what the lapels on the jacket should be, how high the cuffs on my trousers should be. To look my best, I follow my body's geometry."

#### KRIS SWANSON, 34

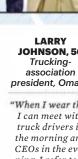
Entrepreneur, Anchorage, Alaska

"If you dress really nice in Alaska, some people might get uncomfortable if they feel they're not up to par. I dress to make those people comfortable."

#### **ANTONIO PACO** GIULIANI, 33

Professor, Chicago

"I'd wear this to a dinner party to pay homage to the fact that someone is hosting me and that I care about the occasion."



#### HARRIS, 37 Writer and

photographer, New Orleans

"I got the jacket from Billy Reid. I hadn't seen anvthing else like it before or after. It's hold, but it's welcoming enough to invite people to talk to me."

#### JOHNSON, 56 president, Omaha

When I wear this. I can meet with truck drivers in the morning and CEOs in the evening. I refer to it as my 'mullet' outfit ... business on top, party on the bottom."

#### TAFT WELCH, 31

Business-development manager, Tulsa

"There's an old cowboy saying: 'Talk less, say more.' Same goes for clothes simple combinations, solid colors. That's me."

#### **RONALD L.** ROBERTS, 42 Real estate

developer, St. Louis

"The bold, professional elements in this outfit work in a corporate environment, but there's enough flexibility so that if I'm going to another office, I can tone it down. I may lose the bow tie. Or I may take off my jacket and roll up my sleeves."

#### BENNETT JACKSON, 27 Concert production associate, Santa Cruz, California

"I love bold dashes of color and patterns, but I also like some rugged elements. I've been joking lately that this is my 'Preppy Western' look.

#### **KENZO KAWANABE, 43** Lawyer, Denver

"I dress my best when I go to court. It makes me feel like a professional. That is what a trial lawyer wears."

#### **ELIAS**

**ROTHBLATT, 25** Product strategist, Brooklyn

"I can easily throw on a tie and know that I'm going to simultaneously meet the demands of both working in New York and wanting to look my best when I head out that night."

#### **CHARLIE ELLIS, 25**

Metal fabricator, Philadelphia

"The sunglasses kind of make me feel like an asshole. I love them."

#### **UCHE** NSONWU, **37**

Realtor, Goodyear, Arizona

"The scarf is an African print. I'm originally from Nigeria, and I like to demonstrate my heritage.'

#### SINA SIMA, 27

Creative director. New York

"I like to have part of my outfit be a lit-tle colorful but not super in-your-face. I like my socks, which have a couple colorful bands at the bottom. And the linen pants' zippered pocket, which I can put my wallet in—just very small things. No one even has to see them, but I appreciate those textures and details much more than I would if they were too in-your-face."

#### **CHAIM BRUK, 33** Rabbi, Bozeman, Montana

"My clothing is always enhanced with my natural Jewish garb: a fun yarmulke on my head, my biblical tzitzit-the fringes that hang from the sides of my pants and my traditional black hat. To me, it's the ultimate fusion: twentyfirst-century style with three thousand years of uplifting tradition."

#### ERIC ELDERBROCK, 27 Farmer, Madison, Wisconsin

"When I wear this shirt, people say nice things. It feels good that people notice, though I pretend to not care."

DAN FERRY, 74
Owner of investor advisory firm, Ladue, Missouri

"In this outfit, I'm going to a backyard cookout at my farm. It's better to be overdressed than underdressed, particularly nowadays. To be underdressed gives somebody the impression that you don't respect the occasion."

#### SEAN REIDY, 31

Charter-school executive director, Alexandria, Virginia

"For work, I always dress my best. Pastels. colors, anything that's bright, lively, motivating.

#### STEPHEN K. **BENJAMIN, 45**

Mayor, Columbia, South Carolina

"I spend most of my life in a suit. So I'm very comfortable in a suit, particularly a blue suit, and whenever I get the opportunity, I like to jazz it up a little bit with a nice handkerchief and maybe a matching tie. It just makes you feel good about yourself."

#### STEVE DEMEDICIS, 63 Tech-company president and

nightclub owner, Birmingham

"I'm not a guy to dress up much. I look really stupid wearing a tie. And it's easier to move wearing jeans, no belt. The boots are real comfortable.'

#### DANIEL SHERON, 26

Musician, Portland, Oregon

"I don't like to wear stuff that's over-the-top, especially when I play gigs. I feel good in classic, well-built stuff. I wore this Gap shirt when I played shows in high school. I think I've had it for twelve or thirteen years. My mom got it for me. Still playing shows in it."

#### **TOM MATHER, 58**

Physician, Charleston, South Carolina

"I feel like it makes me look better than I actually do. I guess that's why I like it: When I've got it on, I think, Wow, I look way better than I ever look."

#### TERRANCE OSBORNE, 40

Artist, New Orleans

"When I'm putting stuff on, there's this moment when it just looks electric and I know I'm done. So I have to keep pulling things off and putting things on until I get that electricity. It happens when I have on this Versace polo."

#### **JULIO CABRERA, 51**

Bartender, Miami

"Going behind the bar is like an actor going on stage: You are the center of the action. So when I go to work, my outfit is the first thing people see, so a tux and a bow tie are a must."

#### ERIC V. MOYÉ, 61 Judge, Dallas

"I've never understood men who say wearing a necktie is uncomfortable. I think wearing a tie is as comfortable as wearing anything."

### DAN GOTTLIEB, 37 Health and wellness instructor, Birmingham,

Michigan

"I had this suit made for my beach wedding last year. It makes me feel real sharp."

#### **DAVID WARN, 39**

Financial-risk manager, Chicago

"The night I wore this outfit, I was going out to do two things: to see an art exhibition and then to see a band play. I wanted to look very smart and wear something very striking. It's one of my favorite sweaters. It was made for me by my mother. She's a fantastic knitter."

#### ROB ROCK, 35 Farmer, Burlington, Vermont

"I wear this because I want people to know that I'm a little bit sophisticated. People are like, 'Oh, you're a farmer?' But you have to have your own style and not submit to what

other people expect

from you.'

#### **DANIEL DRINKARD, 30**

Record-store owner, Birmingham

"I used to work in a corporate-law firm where I had to dress up every day, so I got really burned out on that. If I want to wear something nice, I'll wear my Fred Perry polo and my cleanest, newest jeans. It makes me feel confident."

#### **JOE CARPENTER, 48**

Nutrition advocate, Belvedere, California

"I'd wear this going out in Napa for a fun wine event. It's something fairly versatile, but it's good to add some color so you stand out a little bit."

#### **CHRISTOPHER DAM, 29**

Teacher, Cincinnati

"It's just a self-respect thing. Putting on a shirt and tie or a suit shows respect for myself and the ones around me. A respect for my position and who I am.

#### BEN PASCAL, 38 Pastor, Jackson Hole, Wyoming

"At our worship services, I want to show a sense of approachability. But I also want to show that I take my job seriously."

#### PETER KIRIHARA, 51

Bar and restaurant owner. Minneapolis

``Ilove this jacket.I love the white detail, the stitching. I love it because it's double-breasted, which makes it even more special. It makes me feel just super put-together.'

#### WARD V.B. LASSOE, 54

Psychotherapist, Sullivan's Island, South Carolina

"This makes me feel cool, comfortable, and crisp."

#### KNUTSON, 63

Fisherman, Seattle

"My family is Norwegian. The sweater is kind of the emblem of the culture; it's kind of recognizable. So if I wanna go some place, instead of wearing a formal thing I prefer to wear something that I think looks good and makes me feel good, you know? It makes me feel integrated, like part of a larger tradition. I feel like I don't have to prove anything."

#### FENDER, 29 Deputy fire marshal, Billings,

Montana

"I do all the public education for my fire service, so I put on my gear when going over fire safety with kids and students. When you're part of the fire service. on the iob and off the job and in everything you do, people associate you with it. So you should try to be professional at all times, including how you dress."

#### EDWARD A. LEFRAK, 72

Retired cardiovascular surgeon, McLean, Virginia

"I'm just tired of wearing a black suit when I go someplace. All the men always seem to have the same suit on, so I like to wear something different."

#### TRISTON CAVINESS, 19 Student, New York

"This expresses my simplicity. I get a comfortable vibe. I don't feel like I'm doing it too big, but I know I'm still something to look at."

#### AUSTIN CAVINESS, 19 Student, New York

"I would never go out of my way to look my best-or rather what someone else thinks I should look like. Comfort is big, because I'm an active guy. People who look fashionable but are sweaty...that's a problem."

#### **BRON MOYI, 24** Set dresser.

New Orleans

"I think it's all about making a good first impression with new people, new faces. I think in this outfit, I'd catch someone's eye more than I would in jeans or a T-shirt."

#### SAM DUSING, 24

Willfully unemployed, Brooklyn

"There's a sense of confidence brought out by a great outfit. You want to give the appearance that you're doing well, that you've got your shit together."

#### E. DAVID GOLTL,

Studio proprietor, Dallas

"A person in a suit is a person in charge, a person who knows what's going on. I like being that person, and I like showing it."

#### **ALEX LI. 28**

Federal law clerk, Oklahoma City

"This makes me feel serious, silly, and snazzy all rolled into one."

#### **ADAM TURONI,**

Chocolatier, Savannah

"I chose the suit because I'm a traditionalist. It's an ode to the hard work, dedication, and unending drive of the generation older than mine.

The sweater embraces the fact that I am a millennial. We're entrepreneurs and we make things happen."

#### **BRENDAN** CIECKO, 27 Start-up founder, Boston

"This outfit reflects my style: a strong palette, some balance, and some chromatic chaos.'

#### PAUL A JOHNSGARD, 84 Naturalist, Lincoln, Nebraska

"Whenever I buy clothes, they're mostly utilitarian. I want something that will be warm or waterproof, or cool for nature. I am an outdoorsman, if you will."

#### CARLOS E. POSADAS, 39 Professor,

Las Cruces, New Mexico

"This is a look for interacting with peers. It makes me feel confident and comfortable. It helps me get through whatever business is at hand."

#### **BRIAN K. MOE, 37**

Psychologist, Fargo, North Dakota

"I prefer to dress more casually—it fits my personality, and it seems to relax the person who is reaching out for help."

#### CHEYNE GALLARDE, 34 Photographer, Honolulu

"There's something colorfulthe mustard pants-and some classic elements: the wing-tipped shoes and my vintage Mickey Mouse watch.

#### **AARON BETSKY,** Dean of architec-

ture school, Scottsdale, Arizona

"A lot of what I do is share my enthusiasm for architecture, art, and design, and I do that through lectures. And when I'm sharing my enthusiasm. I want to look authoritative. That is why I like to wear one of my best suits.'

#### BEN JACOBSEN,

Food entrepreneur, Portland, Oregon

"My work and personal life are completely blended, so that's how I dress most every day. I wear Danner boots and Levi's jeans and a Gap oxford shirt and a Filson jacket. And a Jacobsen-branded hat. It's easy, versatile, and durable. I feel like I'm ready for anything." 18





# AT WE WFAR

#### An investigation into the power of the uniform BY TOM CHIARELLA

I WAS A PRIEST, standing at the bar of the Billy Goat Tavern beneath the great concrete decks that brace up downtown Chicago. Strike that. I was not a priest. I shouldn't say that. I was me, me wearing the uniform of a priest. It was 10:30 on a Friday morning, the bar a well-lit temple of Formica. I was visiting my favorite bartender, as is my wont when I am in Chicago. Priest or no: My uniform was an old-school liturgical cassock. Twenty buttons rising to a traditional clerical collar. Part tunic, part Nehru jacket, with a big open flare at my feet. That thing really kicked up in the wind when I walked the city. The thing really had some sweep.

When I walked in, my friend immediately set me up with a nodisrespect-intended pour of bourbon, with a draft beer back. My shoulders were turned to the half-full restaurant; a small circle of recent acquaintances screened me. I'd like to say I was mindful of being the most visible man in the room—me, the priest—but who was I kidding? People had been staring at me for twenty-three blocks. One hour in the uniform and I knew this much: On a bright summer's day, in a sprawling city, a priest in a cassock is a thing to behold. People draw out their eye contact with a priest. They give nods or bow just a smidge. Or they stare. Openly. Respectfully. Distantly. When walking in pairs, men wind up their cheeriest selves to blurt out suddenly, "Good morning, Father." A habit learned in

high school, revisited gladly. Twenty-three blocks and the world could not take its eyes off me. A priest, striding north.

And so, in a what-the-hell moment, I lifted the glass, nodded to Jeff the barkeep, and took that long good swallow. Only as I put the glass back in its ringlet of condensation did I notice a woman who'd maneuvered herself to some pass-through window, filming the whole thing on her phone. "You're going to be on the Internet before you eat lunch," said the barfly to my left without looking up, adding, "Father."

I picked up the beer, took a sip, and told him, "I'm not a priest." He turned, narrowed his eyes, gave me a lazy up-and-down. "What is this, then?" he said. He meant the frock.

"It's a uniform," I said. That was true. This was always my plan. Be honest. And that seemed to be enough, because he went back to his box scores. A couple minutes later, he said, "One thing's for certain, some priest, somewhere, is going to get in trouble for that."

I HAVE NO UNIFORM. Most of the time, I work alone or in conversations across tables in some restaurant in some unfamiliar city. At my most exposed, I stand in front of a classroom of twenty-one-year-olds. Unless you count a track jacket, a T-shirt, and a pair of overly expensive jeans as a uniform, I have no dress



requirements. Sometimes I wear a blazer. I have a really nice blue shirt when I want to wear one. My choice.

This is a ho-hum freedom, earned in some societal shift located broadly in one or another populist surge last century. People see it as a kind of liberation. We are individuals, after all. We are not automatons or drones. We are not our work. And so on.

But a great many people put on a uniform for work every day. I'll admit that I've often longed to wear a uniform, one that demanded something from me and maybe from the world around me. A good uniform represents. It makes sure you show up. It suggests a simplicity of mission. Once you slip it on, any uniform calls for its own posture. Everyone reacts. They step aside, shoot knowing glances, make room for you; or they turn away, try to forget their foggy prejudices, and ignore you.

So I bought four uniforms, modified them using the advice

of people who wear them for real, and wore each one for a full day to test the reaction. A priest, a security guard, a mechanic, and a doctor. I stitched my name on-first, last, or both when appropriate. But I didn't forge a thing. No fake lanyards, no ID cards, no crucifix, no rosary in hand. The idea wasn't to trick people. I wasn't pulling a con or even acting very much. I wasn't trying to get anything: no free entry, no cuts to the front of the line, no undue respect. I issued no false blessings, gave no advice, made no diagnoses.

I BOUGHT MY PRIEST outfit at a religious-wardrobe store just west of Canaryville on the South Side of Chicago. At first I tried on clerical shirts, all black, with the familiar collar. Both long-sleeved and short. I wanted

to look like the Jesuit priests who'd taught me how to write. All business with the comings and goings, a little tired, utterly content to forget the annoyance of deciding what to wear every morning.

The salesclerk was a former Dominican priest. There is fashion among the priests, he said. It's rare for an American priest to wear a cassock outside the church. But, he said, it's becoming more common: "It used to be considered a little vain. But you go to the seminary now and young priests insist on the cassock. They're more conservative and they want to be seen as committed."

He thought I could pass. "Just look like you're going somewhere on church business."

At that, the third-generation owner of the store stepped out of her office to tell me that she disagreed. "No priest would wear that in public."

"Just tell them you're Greek," the salesclerk said. "You look Greek enough."

Generally, when you wear a uniform, no one will touch you. Except the priest. People will touch a priest. On the wrist mostly. It happened to me twelve times, just a tap in the middle of a conversation. An assertion of connection, an acknowledgment of some commonality I could not fathom. Weirdly, the priest's outfit was the most physically demanding uniform to wear. All day with the hugging, and the kneeling to speak to children, and the leaning in for the selfies.

I suppose it is sacrilegious to say this-though I'm obviously way past caring about that now—but sweeping the city with the hem of my cassock hither and you was more like being a beautiful woman than it was representing myself as a celibate guy who lives in a two-room apartment in Hyde Park. I'm telling you: People lingered in their gaze, without lust. I was a fascination, looked at fondly so many times that fondness itself seemed the currency of the world to me. It made me like the world better.

In front of a diner, an old woman seized my wrist firmly and pulled me in for a question. Oh, boy, I thought. Serious business. I prepared to deliver the news that it was just a uniform. "Father," she said earnestly. "Are you Greek Orthodox?" I told her I was not. The truth is easy enough when you're in uniform. Before I could say anything, she released my arm, scowled, and cast me off. "You are Russian! Ugh!" She turned and shouted to me from twenty paces, held up a finger like the curse it surely was. "You are Russian. Russian!" she said, rolling the R as she retreated. "Russian!" she shouted up the street.

No one asked my name. No one called me Father Tom. But that's what the uniform made me. People want to believe.

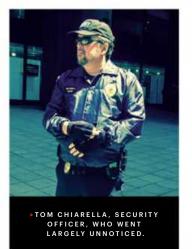
> Especially people in need. All day long, I was faced with homeless men, homeless families, crouched in the street. Sometimes they reached up to me, touched my wrist. Twice I was asked for a blessing that I could not give. Not in the way they wanted. I started wishing that I were capable of performing a service for the world. And I found I could not do nothing. The uniform comes with some responsibility; otherwise, it is just a party costume. I started kneeling down, holding out a ten-dollar bill, and saying, "I'm not a priest. But I feel you." And I couldn't do it once without doing it a couple dozen times. Chicago is a big city, with a lot of souls stuck in its doorways. It still makes me sadder than I could have imagined.

> It's easy to put on a cassock. And it's really not easy to wear one at all.

Late that afternoon, I stood across from the Tribune building as Father Tom and watched a loud and lousy sleight-of-hand magician working a trick involving a signed twenty-dollar bill and a lemon. I stood off to the side, hands clasped behind my back, trying to look ponderously unthreatened by magic. And then I saw the magician's move very clearly, the very moment he jams the rolledup twenty into the lemon. Just like that. Busted. For a moment, I thought it might be the mind-set of a priest taking over. Or maybe he wanted the priest to see, because he winked at me a second later. And suddenly, for the rest of his routine, he called on me, to bear him out, to provide faith, to witness the machinations. Questions like "That seems honest enough-right, Father?" And could I back him up on this? The request to weigh in as the conscience of the moment really wore on me. Finally, I turned and walked away. "Father," he called out. "Don't leave. Only you know the truth! You're the most trusted man here!" Too much subtext. Exhausted, Father Tom walked to a food cart, bought a tamale, and waved to a tour bus that honked at him. They waved back, too. Both decks.

IF IT'S TRUE THAT EVERYONE likes to look at a priest, then let me tell you that no one likes to look at a security guard. Especially not a geeked-up security enthusiast like Tom Chiarella, Security Officer. Not even other security guards. There is no brotherhood of the law among guys who mostly watch a crowd and ask people not to sit on the stairs in front of a museum. People avert their eyes, stare at the horizon.

When I told my friend, a longtime cop, that I was going to be wearing the uniform of a security guard and asked if he'd



help me think out ways to make it look more authentic, he had a question: "Are you gonna be one of those happy guys? Or are you going to be, I don't know, that other kind?" At the time, we were going through containers of defunct equipment in a police-department storeroom, looking for spare parts. I wanted Tom Chiarella, Security Officer, to care about the details.

"In my experience, some security guys put on the uniform and it makes them," my friend said, "and then they have a certain way they carry themselves. You've seen it. It's a military posture. They stand up into the job. They get squared up. The uniform squares them up. They look so happy. Happy guys. And there is the other kind. They get into the very same outfit and the whole thing looks permanently sloppy, and they can't do anything about it. Not ever. The first guy, he listens. He's the one I'd use. The other kind, you look right at them and you know they might as well work at Taco Bell."

Tom Chiarella, Security Officer, was the first kind. The happy guy. Not ebulliently happy, but happy inside the obligation of the uniform. I stayed quiet, hid behind a pair of dark glasses, carried many things on my belt: handcuffs, a 2400-lumen flashlight, a pair of plastic gloves for evidence collection, a radio and a corded handset, a completely redundant earpiece, a can of Mace, a notepad and a penholder. So many leather pouches. My friend had warned me to match them up carefully. If one pouch was braided leather, they all had to be. "It matters," he'd said. "If you don't match up, people will start to wonder. You'll see. People look at you. In a way, even as a security guard, you are the law. You need to have it together. People do a check

down on you. They check out your stuff. You don't have a gun. So they'll look even harder at what you do have."

THEIR WAY TO ASSIST

A PHYSICIAN

"I'm just security," I said. "Not police."

"Law," my friend said. "They represent the law. That's what they teach them. You represent. You can't say you're a cop. But you can look like the law matters."

I could represent. So I paid to emblazon every surface of the uniform I set up—jacket, hat, shirt, badge—with the word *Security*. I bought and had fitted my first-ever pair of double-knit pants. I tucked in, buckled up, and made an orderly appearance.

On the campus of DePaul University, people asked if I was with the university. Near a hospital, I was asked if I worked for the clinic or the theater across the street. I told the truth. Neither. Nothing more. Somehow people accepted the nothingness of my answers as if they were answer enough. No one ever followed up. The uniform made me feel terse. Not tense. *Terse*. Abbreviated. Interfacing with the world, as Tom Chiarella, Security Officer, liked to call it, was an occasional occupational obligation.

I just went places. Breakfast joints. Yawning retail spaces. It was the same everywhere I went—people treated me like part of the background. I stood for forty-five minutes in an Anthropologie store in a mall in the Loop, my arms folded across my chest, hips swaying, sunglasses on. No one talked to me, so I drifted into a way of thinking that I associated with the uniform. I watched my six. I kept my head on a swivel. I checked flanking positions, though I really wasn't certain what that meant. Not one clerk or salesperson asked me if I needed help. Why would they? The posture and the uniform asserted that I

belonged. Belonged to the mall. I didn't have to speak in my job, so I was not spoken to.

At one point, I hitched my belt and went out to look for a restroom. A janitor was mopping when I got there. I told him I could wait. He didn't even seem to hear me. He spoke to me as if we saw each other daily. "It's slow today," he said. I looked around, nodded. Then he said, "Yesterday, with the rain..."

"... Things were slow," I said, thinking I was agreeing with him. He looked at me then like he'd been stung by a bee.

"No. Yesterday was crazy in here, remember?" he said. "The rain drives them inside, right?"

"I wasn't here," I said. Again, the truth. The day before, I'd walked as Father Tom.

"Yeah," he said. "You were off yesterday. I didn't see you at all yesterday." Then he waved me through to the urinals. He had

zip-up overalls, name stitched on the pocket.

I returned to Anthropologie, to my selfclaimed post near the rack of semitropical cotton blouses, again not drawing a glance. Soon I got restless. It was a big getup. A lot of work to put together, and to wear. The sight of me drew no reaction. I could have done an eighthour shift without comment from the world around me or the women who worked there. The security officer fit only in the background. Sometimes the uniform simply fits the place so well that people who should know better don't give you any thought at all. On the street, amid the hubbub, the priest occupied the foreground. People wanted something from him. The security guard? Backgrounded. He and his uniform became just another furnishing. Nobody wanted anything from Tom Chiarella,

Security Officer. Except directions. People get turned around in that city.

IBOUGHT A VINTAGE PATCH on eBay—it read JOHNNY ANTONELLI TIRE CO. INC., an out-of-business tire retailer from my childhood in Rochester, New York. I affixed it to the left side of a blue zip-up jumpsuit I'd purchased at a tractor-supply store and had my name stitched on the other side. I put it on and walked. So I was a tire guy, Tom, who worked at a shop so small that most people assumed they'd never heard of it.

And though it's not fair to any tire guy anywhere...no one cared. The uniform didn't register. I never got so much as eye contact, except from a student nurse sitting at a table at an Italian grocery on Randolph Street. I was waiting in line. "Is that a *Wall Street Journal*?" she asked, referring to the hotel newspaper that I'd folded up and stuck in my back pocket like a racing form. It felt like she was picking on me.

Only anachronisms got even a vague reaction. I hailed a cab with a torque wrench, walked blocks dangling a Twix bar from my fingers, carried a half-dozen roses, sat on a city bus reading 50 Poems by e. e. cummings. It started to feel like I was jumping up and down, asking to be seen. No one saw me. I gave up and went to a movie.

**FINALLY, I BECAME** a doctor. I bought a pair of scrubs, got them fitted, and had my name stitched on yet again, this time over a logo that read DEPAUW UNIVERSITY, the name of the Indiana college where I am a faculty member. I knew that with a quick glance most people would mistake it for DePaul. [continued on page 186]

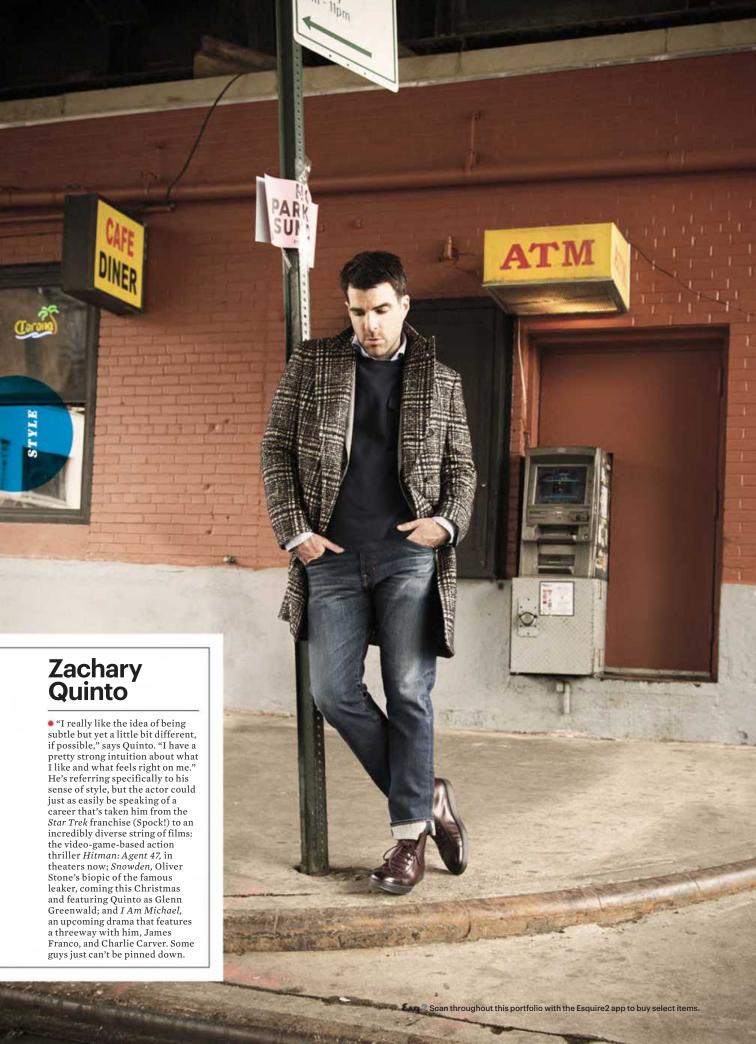










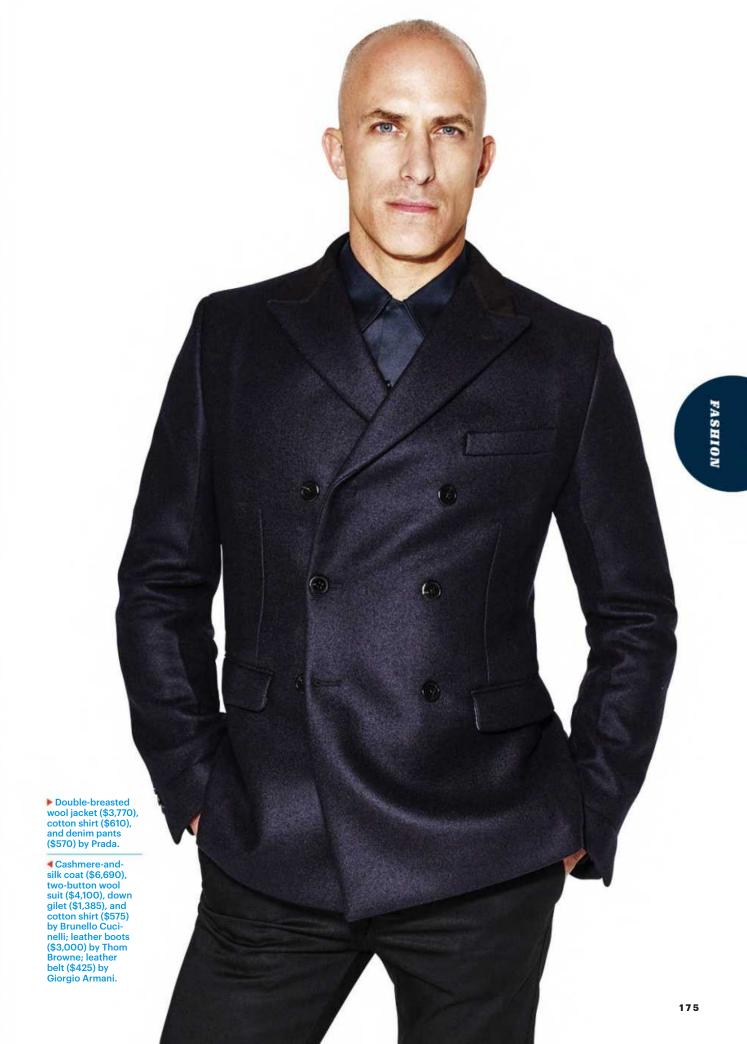


Double-breasted cotton-and-linen jacket (\$2,850) by Bottega Veneta; cotton shirt (\$495) and wool trousers (\$695) by Marc Jacobs; ceramic Speedmaster Moonwatch chronograph (\$12,000) by Omega.

Double-breasted wool-blend coat (\$1,495) by Lardini; two-button wool jacket (\$1,875), cotton sweatshirt (\$525), and cotton shirt (\$550) by Michael Bastian; cotton-blend jeans (\$225) by AG; calfskin sneakers (\$625) by Santoni; socks by Bresciani.







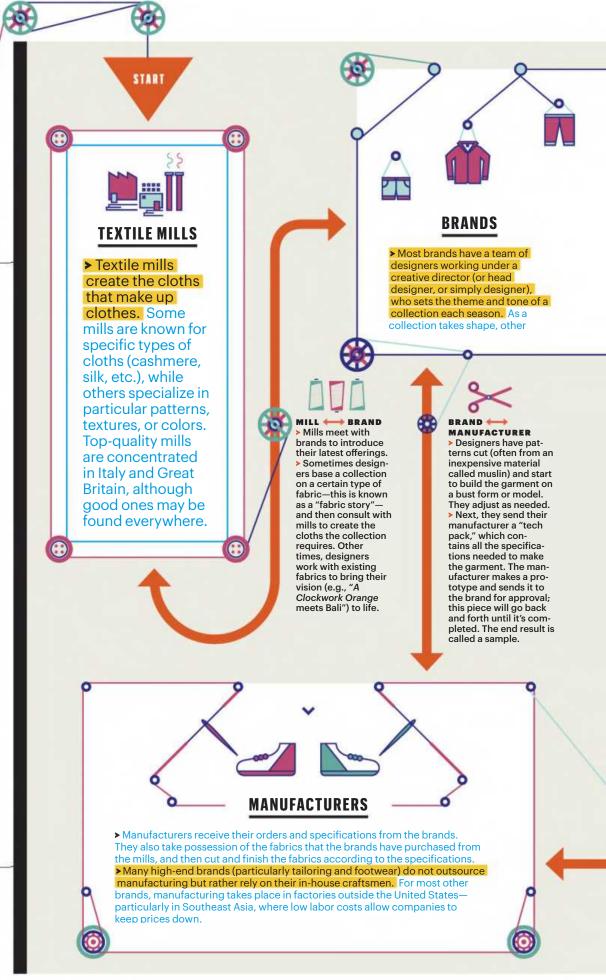




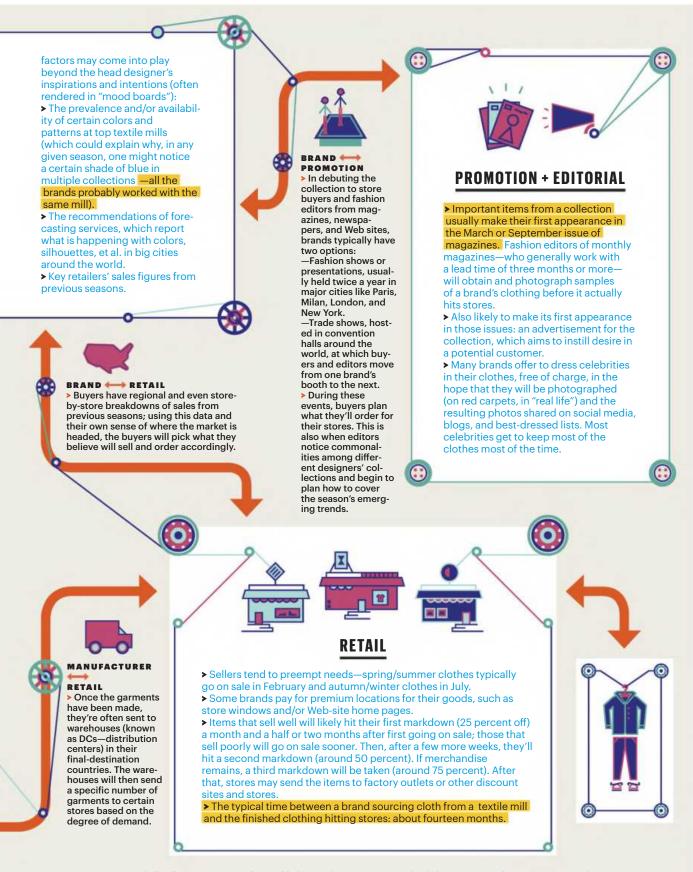


September 2015









WITH THANKS TO: Michelle Alleyne, assistant professor of fashion marketing at Parsons School of Design; Tim Crabtree, account specialist at American Merchandise Liquidators; Sandi Davidson, professor of fashion design at Savannah College of Art and Design; Pamela Ellsworth, associate professor and chairperson of global fashion management at Fashion Institute of Technology; Catherine Geib, assistant professor of fashion merchandising management at FIT; Bernard Kahn, adjunct assistant professor of production management at FIT; James Mendolia, assistant professor of fashion marketing at Parsons; and Patti Carpenter, president and creative director of Carpenter + Company and Trendscope.



BY JOSHUA DAVID STEIN

Photograph by Wesley Mann



Simon Spurr built his namesake brand from the ground up and became one of his generation's most compelling designers. Then, like so much in the fashion business, things went terribly wrong.

SIMON SPURR SIPS PILSNER from a tall glass in the back room of the Polo Bar in New York, the latest addition to Ralph Lauren's vast empire. Spurr surveys the painted ponies that hang on the wall and sinks deep into the leather banquette. Though the restaurant is only a block south from Spurr's office at Kent & Curwen, an English heritage brand for whom he serves as creative director, it's his first time here. Sorta. "I've never actually set foot inside," he says, "but I know this world well enough."

He's speaking doubly. From 2003 to 2005, Spurr was the men's

design director for Ralph Lauren's Purple Label, the house's most prestigious line, meeting with Lauren every Tuesday and Thursday to discuss the collection. He breathed in Lauren's universe of finely choreographed equines and impeccably mannered gentlemen and exhaled finely tailored suits with just a hint of edge. And like his old boss, Spurr was once at the helm of his own namesake brand, a high-end collection of suits and sportswear worn by handsome and famous men (Cooper, Bradley; Gosling, Ryan; Timberlake, Justin) and many not as handsome, not

as famous, but nevertheless stylish men. Plaudits came, profiles were breathless, profits looked promising. In fact, if things had gone as planned, he might be sitting in the Spurr Lounge, one small corner of a kingdom built on his estimable talents.

But things didn't go as planned. There is no lounge and there is no empire. There is only Simon Spurr, a forty-one-year-old man who, three years ago and at the height of his creative powers, lost control of the brand that bears his own name and, as a result, can no longer design clothes that bear his own name. The loss has changed him. "It is like I gave birth to a beautiful baby," he says of his brand, "and then it was ripped from me." Which would be tragic if, in the dark inner seams of the fashion business, this kind of thing didn't happen all the time.

**PEOPLE LIKE SPURR.** He's charming and reserved in a way that makes you want him to like you back. He's blessed by good looks and talent, and he is a decent darts player and an eminently good hang. In fact, life until 2012 looks to have been remarkably easy on him. "My career has had a lot of moments of acceleration," is how he puts it, "and thankfully I hit many of them while still quite young." Born in a tiny town in Kent, England, Spurr studied art at the Kent Institute of Art and Design before being pushed to consider fashion by two of his female tutors. He enrolled at Middlesex University in London, focusing on men's fashion design, and by all accounts excelled. In 1996, straight out of university, he went to work for Nautica and then Yves Saint Laurent, the legendary fashion house now under the direction of Hedi Slimane, who had been tasked by the company's cofounder, Pierre Bergé, with making the line relevant to a younger audience. "That was a major acceleration point," says Spurr, and a lesson, too: "Hedi taught me never to look at trends but to follow my own vision." In 2001, on the back of a series of well-received runway shows, Spurr was poached by Calvin Klein to become the senior designer for CK Calvin Klein, which was one of the American designer's many subbrands.

He moved to New York, and when he arrived at Klein's midtown headquarters, assured of what lay ahead, he wore a mohawk mullet, a white T-shirt, blue jeans, and albino-python cowboy boots. After two years with Klein, Spurr was recruited to work on Purple Label, and by 2004 he had risen to be men's design director for both Purple and Black labels, the latter a slightly edgier and less expensive alternative to the former. "I was told that I had a very bright future at the company," says Spurr, but he began contem-

plating his next move. In the Upper West Side apartment he shared with his fiancée (whom he'd go on to marry) and their Rhodesian ridgeback, he began sketching the perfect pair of blue jeans. "I always wore blue jeans growing up in England," he explains, "but here, even though we were in the middle of the premium-denim explosion, I couldn't find anything I loved. I just wanted a clean and simple jean without an elaborate wash." So he made them in his apartment.

Spurr stopped by the newly opened denim library at Bergdorf Goodman to look up his old friend Tommy Fazio. Fazio had been the head of men's collections at Calvin Klein when Spurr was there but had moved on to become the men's fashion director for the iconic department store. "One day I get a call from Simon that he's on the floor," recalls Fazio. "I went out and he said, 'Tommy, I want to start my own line.' I thought, It's about time!"

According to Susan Scafidi, founder of Fordham University's Fashion Law Institute, a designer looking to strike out on his own typically has two options: "There's a traditional investor," she says, "who usually takes a stake and looks for a return in three to five years. Or there's a strategic partner, who's going to want more involvement, whether that is a seat on the board, majority ownership, or active involvement. The ideal investor will come with industry know-how and be able to help." (Probably the most famous strategic partner in American fashion right now is Andrew Rosen, the CEO of Theory, who used the proceeds of an earlier sale of that company to help fund and guide the likes of Proenza Schouler and Rag & Bone.)

In 2005, his idea for a premium denim brand ready to launch, Spurr thought he had found the ideal strategic partner in a young financial manager named Judd Nydes. In hindsight, Spurr can't really say why he partnered with Nydes, especially since he recalls having other options. "So many of my other friends would've put in the money and stayed out of the business," Spurr says now, and yet Nydes was the one. "We were friends at the time and I figured I could coach and teach and bring someone that wasn't within the fashion world into the fashion world." Nydes and Spurr contributed about \$100,000 of their own money toward seed capital, and ten of Nydes's friends contributed an additional \$5,000 to \$15,000 each. In the summer of 2005, the Nydes-Spurr Group LLC was born, with operations based in Spurr's apartment. The pair went back and forth on the name of this new brand. "Originally I wanted to call it Black Denim," says Spurr. "But when you attach a designer to a product, it has more guts." Plus, he says, "Spurr is quite a blue-

### THE BRIEF AND WONDROUS LIFE OF SIMON SPURR (THE BRAND)



**→ 2012** 

jeans western name, isn't it?" The pair settled on SPURR, all caps.

That Spurr wanted to stamp his name onto his creations shouldn't be surprising—signing one's name to one's work comes naturally to a former art student. Still, Spurr knew he was taking a risk using his own name: Stories of designers who have lost control of their name litter the history of fashion, from Joseph Abboud and Helmut Lang to Jil Sander, all of whom started an eponymous brand, built up design teams and brand equity in their own image, sold the brand to a larger corporation, and watched as their new arrangements fell apart. The designers departed, some out of frustration, some fired, while the companies they founded and named after themselves kept plugging right along. Spurr knew all of this, telling a writer from this magazine in 2011: "I read all the horror stories. I own my own name." This was 100 percent, partially true. He did own his name, but so did all the other shareholders of the Nydes-Spurr Group LLC. "I was naive," he says now. "But when you enter a honeymoon, you're not thinking of the armageddon."

Almost immediately, SPURR was a hit. Tommy Fazio at Bergdorf bought thirty-six pairs of jeans—twelve of each style (classic, boot, and pipe)—which, at \$345, sold out in four days. Within three years, SPURR had expanded into knitwear, sportswear, and even suiting, and the business had grown so much, in fact, that it needed both more capital and a leader. It found the latter in Fazio, who became the company's president. For the former, Nydes approached an acquaintance of his, the Swedish heir Hugo Stenbeck, whose grandfather, also named Hugo Stenbeck, had founded one of Sweden's largest investment companies. Stenbeck petit-fils was a sailing enthusiast who had grown up in Glen Head, Long Island, and attended NYU, and according to Spurr, his investment was approximately \$5 million. (Stenbeck did not respond to repeated requests for comment.)

It was time for SPURR to go from a small company to a big one. In 2009, with the new investment, SPURR's headquarters moved from Spurr's apartment to a two-thousand-square-foot white-walled space in the Baron Building on Eleventh Avenue, next to Adam Kimmel's, Thom Browne's, and Stella McCartney's New York operations. "That was the moment for me," says Spurr, "it felt like a real company." That same year, he launched a designer line called SIMON SPURR. This was to be the crown jewel of the Spurr empire, so fittingly it would bear Spurr's full name, and among the glowing reviews for an early collection, a writer for this magazine described it as "precisely the kind of global perspective that American men's wear needs right now." Under Fazio's leadership, Spurr's clothing expanded to 120 stores.

Throughout the growth, there was friction between Nydes and Spurr. Spurr says now that Nydes wanted too much attention. Nydes says Spurr refused to consider the bottom line in everything from the fabrics he chose to work with to the number of garments he showed in any given collection. "At the end of the day," Nydes says, "a shearling coat is not going to be where you make your money." Fazio, shoulder to shoulder with Spurr, remembers the time as confused and confusing. "They didn't understand how fashion works," he says of the money guys. "We needed a large enough collection so we could offer Barneys a different look than Fred Segal. But they just didn't get it."

**THE IDES OF MARCH 2012** should have been the high point in Spurr's career. The day before, on March 14, Spurr had been nominated for a Council of Fashion Designers of America award for men's-wear designer of the year. Sales of both SPURR and SI-MON SPURR were up. But the tension that had long been brewing

# "There comes a point where either you can break or you can walk away, and I wasn't going to break."

between Nydes and Stenbeck on one side and Fazio and Spurr on the other finally came to a breaking point. Though Nydes insists there was never a crisis and never a cash-flow problem, Fazio says many of the company's problems stemmed from a fundamental disagreement about the direction of the company. "They didn't understand that when you have a small apparel company, you have to reinvest in growth. It costs money to buy fabric, make samples, not to mention marketing, advertising, bigger manufacturing capabilities." Spurr, for his part, says he had been approaching the fashion conglomerates Richemont and Only the Brave (now OTB, the parent company of Diesel) to invest in his brand in exchange for offering his design services to their larger labels. They were interested in having Spurr work for them, he says, but "they all thought our brand was too small to invest in." However, it was not the money, or lack of it, that would ultimately force Spurr's hand. "The clincher," he says, "was my name." Before launching the designer line back in 2009, Nydes-Spurr Group LLC had trademarked the name Simon Spurr. Both Spurr and Fazio say they suggested entering the trademark into a trust, which would own the name and license it to the company as long as certain benchmarks in quality and brand position were met. Nydes and Stenbeck demurred, and, according to Spurr, "they told me they owned me." Things came to a head in the spring of 2012, and even as news of the CFDA nomination broke, Nydes and Spurr bickered. On March 16, when it became clear no more investment was forthcoming and no trust would be established, Spurr e-mailed his resignation to all the shareholders. "They called my bluff," he explains, "and I delivered."

"Ultimately, it wasn't just one thing," says Spurr. "It was seven years of attrition. There comes a point where either you can break or you can walk away, and I wasn't going to break." Though Spurr attempted to regain control of the trademark, his efforts didn't pan out. "My lawyers and I tried to negotiate with Judd but to no avail," Spurr says. "Their response is that they want a small equity stake of a possible new venture, to which I am categorically opposed." So the name "Simon Spurr" belongs to the LLC, and the LLC isn't about to let go. "It's absurd to think that this brand, which we all invested our time and money in, is something that Simon can just walk away with," says Nydes. "It's ours too." (Nydes is not without standing. Scafidi, the fashion-law professor, says ultimately the trademark is any fashion label's single most valuable asset. "Designers come and go. Inventory is actually a detriment. It comes down to the name.")

After the break, things fell apart for Spurr. "It took me six months to really get over it," he says, and to realize "that Simon Spurr the brand did not define Simon Spurr the man." Two months into that period of mourning, his marriage disintegrated. "When I walked away from my brand, I walked away from my marriage, too...." Spurr says, falling silent for a time. "I thought I'd never do fashion again." [continued on page 188]

# ISAIAIS ISAIA. I'MIZZY.

THE MEASURED PRONOUNCEMENTS

OF AN ALMOST TAILOR

INTERVIEW BY SCOTT RAAB

For thirty-two years, Israel "Izzy" Zuber has been selling men's suits on West Forty-fifth Street off Sixth Avenue, three floors up, at LS Men's Clothing. To call the place nondescript would be flowery. It's one huge room, intermittently lit, filled mainly with racks of suits. It's Izzy's joint, and though he still sells suits off-the-rack to help crack the nut, his custom-suit business is why guys come find him. Through the rise and fall (and rise) of suits in the workplace, through the introduction of online customization, through changing perceptions of fit and fashion, they come to Izzy. Because Izzy knows suits.

- > I'll tell you a story. Two customers come in here, two young guys, and one says, "Would you put cuffs on this suit?" It was a very modern suit, and I say, "I feel personally that all suits should have cuffs. I like suits with cuffs." So his friend says, "You don't know what you're talking about. Nowadays, no pleats, no cuffs." There's another customer standing over there. He pulls out his business card. He's a salesman at Isaia, and he's a customer of mine. Isaia is like the end of the world, the most expensive suits. I mean, Isaia is Isaia. I'm Izzy. So he gives his card to the guy and he says, "You know, it's not my store. I just shop here. But in our store, nobody leaves without cuffs on a suit." The other guy just shut up.
- > I'm not a tailor. I don't know how to put a thread through a needle, but I know how to find people who can do it. Back in 1987, I started playing around a little bit with the custom-order business. Back then you either got a full-blown custom suit in England or there used to be a few Hong Kong people who came to the city. There wasn't much going on in the made-to-measure business here. A lot of people come up here, they think a custom



IZZY ZUBER IN HIS SHOP IN NEW YORK CITY.

suit means that you have functional buttonholes or you have the pockets slanted. It's all very nice and sweet, but that's not what a custom suit is. You know, a custom suit is finding the right fit that's appropriate for your body.

- > In a bespoke suit, the definition of the word bespoke means something ordered for you, something made from scratch for you. That means that the tailor is starting without any pattern and he's gonna create something new for you. A proper bespoke suit requires you going back to the tailor approximately four times before he cuts the suit, and because of the amount of hours that are put into it, bespoke has to cost at least \$2,200, minimum. I really get peeved when people call me and they say, "So this other guy does bespoke...." Don't give me that crap. I know of only one or two tailors left in New York who know how to do it. The rest of them say they do it, but they don't do it.
- > Made-to-measure means that a factory—which is a factory at the end of the day, it's not a one-man cobbler—they're using a pattern and they make all the adjustments necessary based on the measurements and information I give them. The advantage of made-to-measure suits is, first of all, you are not limited to what's in the store. I have three thousand different fabrics, and then you can choose the style that you want. Each manufacturer has their own point of view and type of cut, and I could take your measurements and it can be interpreted by the same manufacturer in eight different ways.
- > Several years ago, must be about fifteen years ago, I remember a company had this machine. You went into a box, you stripped down to, like, just a bodysuit, and the computer would throw lights on three hundred different spots on your body and would take all of your measurements. Sounds pretty easy, and I remember when I first read about it, I thought, Oh, my God, this is gonna kill the business. The problem is that when you took all this information, it was so exact it didn't work. In other words, all the suits that were coming out didn't fit people. Some things you can't measure. Tape ain't gonna help you. It's the interpretation of the measurements that is important. You look at a body and you say, "Oh, I have to hold it a little tighter or a little looser in this spot—a guy can be bigger in the front and small in the back." Every body is a completely different thing. Every body's a challenge. At the end of the day, it's an art. It's not a science. That's what's important. People think that everything is absolutely measurable. It's not.
- > The whole idea of buying [custom suits] off the Internet, it's ridiculous. First of all, how can you let the guy measure him-

self? You know what it's gonna look like? You can't. It's an art. The whole thing, cuckoo. When customers complain, and customers, rightfully, complain all the time, they're going to say, "I took the measurements the computer told me to take!"

- > The problem with fit today is that people don't want their suit to fit them—they want the suit to look the way it does on the guy in the magazine. People have expectations that they have the body of Rock Hudson or whoever, and they don't have the body of that guy. If somebody wants perfection, I tell them, "Hey, do me a favor and go to my competitor, because I can't offer perfection." God does perfect. I can't. And you can't put a guy into these skinny suits and the short jackets you see in magazines. It's ridiculous. And forget about the short pants where they go to your ankles.
- > **Today,** it's the difference between a suit made in China and a suit made in the United States, and everything we have here is American-made. American manufacturers know what an American body is. They fit an American body. We eat different and we are built different [from other nationalities]. That's the reality of it.
- > You have guys who come and they just grind on the tailor, and they don't even tip him. Everybody should give, like, five dollars to your tailor. I had an old Jewish customer, and one of the first times he comes up, he goes into the tailor room, looks at the tailors, and goes over to one guy and gives him a twenty-dollar tip. I said, "What was that about?" He said, "I'm looking for the guy who's actually gonna do the work. For the rest of his life, whenever he sees me, now he's gonna do my work properly." And he did.
- > I have not had a quote-unquote American—I mean, they're all citizens, thank God—but I have not had a native-born American tailor since I'm here. I have never met one. I've never met one. Where was the last school you saw where they teach tailoring? You could take every kid in the ghetto areas or in Baltimore today and teach them tailoring. I can give you three hundred jobs in tailoring in the United States. There's nobody around. Nobody's learning the trade. And there's a lot of openings, there's a lot of need for it, and nobody's learning it. Nobody.
- > **Since '09,** when everybody discovered that they're not as smart as they really are and they're not making as much as they should be making, you find that people are dressing better, you know, taking their clothing more seriously. They buy less, but they buy better. That's an important thing.
- ➤ I take each suit seriously. And I've been doing this thirty-two years, and at the end of the day everybody else is gone. ☑

PHOTOGRAPH BY WESLEY MANN 185

### What We Wear...

[continued from page 167]

Since basically everyone wears scrubs at a hospital-nurse, orderly, X-ray technician-I had to find a way to convey that I was a doctor. I tried a lab coat, even put my name on it, but I could see that made me look more lab tech than cardiologist. I needed something better, so I sat in a hospital beforehand and watched the foot traffic of doctors and med students. The doctors moved with a chronic urgency. And they unfailingly stared into their phones and tablets distractedly, or carried clipboards or stopped to flip pages rapidly. They seemed to spend significant time looking into the guts of a problem, blocking out the world around them, a perceptible purpose and direction to every step. Slow or fast, the doctors seemed to be moving from one situation to another by social contract.

I started with that, Walking, north, But I walked fast and stopped only to look into my phone or flip pages on my clipboard. I looked up the street anxiously. I pictured the destination dimly to the north and manufactured a problem that demanded I get there now. I wanted people to think: This guy doesn't even have time to hail a cab. Somebody needs him.

He's got to be a doctor.

And, you know, the world gives way to a doctor. People step aside, cabbies wave you through intersections. Before long I started to really sweat, ducked into a restaurant to pick up a little AC action. Almost as soon as I was inside, the urgency subsided. This would not stand. So as the hostess approached, I held up my finger. "Hold on one second," I said, and then I stared into my phone, perhaps at some test results that had just come in. I decided to just stare, to see how long the routine could last. Minutes passed. Eventually I pretended to scroll down, using two fingers rather than one on the touch screen. I thought this was a nice touch, rife with verisimilitude. When the hostess approached again, I interrupted her and took a shallow half step back. "Just one sec," I said without looking up, knowing full well that I risked being the rude doctor now.

But she said, "Of course, of course. We just wanted to know: Do you need a glass of water?" She didn't even consider me a customer anymore. I was just a doctor who needed a place to work.

I went to the next block, stepped into a sporting-goods store, and did it again. Asked for forbearance and a little space, looked into a problem. Then a bank, a waxing salon, a shoe warehouse, a veterinary clinic. People made room. Room for responsibility. A little space to help. They offered me a seat. When people asked me where I was headed, I just hooked a thumb over my shoulder, to the north-true!and then looked back into my phone.

Sometimes they even knew where I was headed. Right through the haze of my vagaries. "I know. The breast clinic. On Diversey, right? You need to be closer to the lake!" And I'd thank them. They offered to get me an Uber. Or a bottle of water. I didn't feel like a liar, or a lying doctor. I felt like they were seeing into a doctor's life and I was seeing into the city.

In a dank basement bar called the Manhole, where they were playing thumping dubstep at 4:30 in the afternoon in preparation for a lube-wrestling event, I breezed past the bouncer and asked the shirtless, leatherpantsed bartender for half a beer, "Because," I said, distractedly indicating the scrubs, the life, the predicament implied. Then I hooked the thumb northward. "Well, you know..." And he really did know. Half a beer. Cold, too.

Past Wrigley Field, at an empty skating rink, the janitor offered me his phone when he saw mine die. "You shouldn't be without a phone," he said. At a mattress warehouse, I was offered a seat on the closest bed to the door. Five minutes I sat there before I took a deep breath and leaned back. I actually lay down. I was exhausted. Then I popped up and apologized. "Perfectly okay," the salesman said. "Happens all the time. As you might imagine." He paused. "Well, not with a doctor. That's never happened before." Bam. He said doctor.

The world wants to help a doctor. The uniform conveys a responsibility that people are willing to share. They took little bits from the priest, and ignored the security guard, and didn't bother to see the mechanic, but they gave to the doctor. Ceaselessly and for many city blocks.

The only time I really wore a uniform to work was when I was twenty-four and waiting tables at a Mexican restaurant called Cucos, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. I dreaded the idea of wearing a uniform then. And that uniform-such as it was-consisted of a blue knit polo shirt and an apron that I picked up every night off a hook in a broom closet. No logo, no stitched-on name. The manager, a redhead whose name I can't remember, pulled the shirt from a cabinet in her office, threw it to me, and said, "This is the best I can do right now." The shirt was tiny, two sizes short of what I needed. I told her it wouldn't fit. Then she looked from the shirt in my hands to my face and said, "So leave it on the desk. I'll give it to the next person who walks in here looking for a job." I huffed some lame apology, but she stated again, "This is all I have for you."

Just then I didn't matter one bit. I'd never done a damn thing for her and still she had handed me a uniform. A job. So yes, the shirt mattered more than the man. I understood the deal.

That week, I pulled that miserable shirt over my frame like a tube sock four times before I banked enough tips to pay the dayshift bartender twenty bucks for his spare blue shirt. He was a big guy, two sizes larger than me. And so it was that I came to have two uniforms for work. Impossibly small and implausibly big. Every day I had to choose: pantyhose or circus tent.

I quickly learned that no one else noticed. No snickers, no comments. The blue shirt was all that mattered. Me-my body, my corporeal self-I didn't register one bit, so long as I refilled the chips and delivered the 'ritas while the glasses were still icy. I just had to do my job. The blue shirt was me. Me in that job.

You might find this depersonalizing. Not so. The blue shirt meant I owed the world only what the job demanded, and only for those few hours. I came to relish disappearing into the hectic mechanics of work, into a routine of expectation and ritualized tasks. It turned out I could forget myself for a few hours. I was soon named employee of the month. Twice.

The uniform meant something. And when I left through the same doors into the darkling lot, freed from the grip of Cucos, the uniform suddenly and absolutely meant nothing at all. I took it off in the crook made by the door of my pickup and drove home shirtless. I see now that the uniform itself was liberating. Had I never had it in the first place or shaken it off when I had to, I may never have sensed the power of work and the confining limits of a lousy job.

**In Chicago,** on the night before I was to walk the streets as a priest, I went to a theater fundraising event at Chicago's Soho House, I'd been invited as Tom Chiarella. I attended as Father Tom, the priest. These were my first hours in the cassock. And there, during the fundraising part of the event, two pretty women exposed me.

"You're not a priest," the younger one said. So right out of the gate I was caught, the only time in the four days it happened.

I told them the truth. Then I asked how they knew. "There are a million things," one said. "You have a tattoo on your wrist. Your hair is a bit too long."

"And look at the way you occupy space," said the other. "You get in too close!"

They stared at me as I shifted on my feet. "There are just ways a man of the cloth will stand when he's in the company of women," said the woman who first spoke. "You are simply not standing in that way. You're too close. And you aren't aware of your hips. You're angled wrong."

They went on. No crucifix. I'd sat on a barstool-that would never happen. The cassock was a problem for them. They had never seen one outside the church.

I knew that was a risk. I told them as much. "Besides, it's a tricky thing to wear in public. There are no pockets," I said. "I have to hitch the whole thing up to get to my wallet." I bent a little and started to demonstrate the issue, how I would have to hike up this giant skirt to retrieve five bucks for the valet. Both of them waved me off. "It looks kind of pervy, right?" I said. I asked them if they knew how a priest would have dealt with it.

Neither of them did. "There are some things only a priest would know," one of them said.

They thought I must be an actor. I told them no. Eventually I asked about their faith, since they seemed to know a priest when they saw one. And when they didn't.

They told me, too. I just listened. It seemed like what was called for. 12

### **New Orleans**

[continued from page 124] "There were a lot of MacGyvers in here during that time," deBoisblanc says. "People in the city, when their houses flooded and their power failed, where did they turn for refuge? They turned to their hospitals. So they became sanctuaries. People came to the hospital for refuge."

The doctor became a bit famous, doing interviews from the garage on CNN and a number of other national newscasts. "The obvious first casualty was communication," deBoisblanc recalls. "And it only got worse from there. I think it was probably Wednesday morning when morale hit its lowest. We'd been in there without power for well over forty-eight hours and had been managing to take care of these sick people in this oppressive heat. After the storm went through and the sun came out, it was 100 degrees and there was all this water and the humidity.

"We were getting news feeds coming in on transistor radios that just weren't true. About people going around shooting. That there were snipers. That made us fearful to go outside. The outside world was hearing all of these horrible stories, so they were afraid to come in. The second part was being told that our salvation depended on somebody else, that we were not able to take care of ourselves. People, when they get idle, they get restless. Just sitting around was awful. And then there wasn't this esprit de corps that you really need. So it was Wednesday morning when people began to get this idea that if we're going to get off this rock, we're going to have to do it ourselves. We were kind of invisible for four or five days. I heard a news report that people were breaking into the pharmacy at Charity Hospital to steal drugs, and I was standing in the pharmacy at the time."

As the events of the storm passed, and with the help of the military, the staff at Charity worked endlessly to get the hospital back up and functioning. Within weeks, the building was declared "medical ready" by General Russel Honoré, the Army general who had bulldogged the relief effort from the moment he'd hit town. A subsequent study by RMJM Hillier, one of the world's most prestigious architecture firms, testified to the building's soundness and estimated that it would cost \$550 million to convert it to a state-of-theart hospital and research facility, and without taking out an entire neighborhood in the process. Charity stayed closed.

Curiously, once the troops pulled out, the volunteers who had labored to put it back together were locked out. Even more curiously, vandalism began to break out throughout the building, as will happen to places left to sink where they stood. The state, and LSU, which is often referred to as the fourth branch of the Louisiana state government, wanted their new medical center up the street, and now they had an opportunity, and a lot of public money, to get it for themselves. A civic brawl

broke out between the people who wanted to save Charity and the people who needed it to stay closed. It was a microcosm of everything that was going on all over the city. It was a mirror in which you could see recovery and rebirth, or disaster capitalism at its most ruthless, depending on which end of the power continuum you found yourself on. Charity Hospital had become iconic one last time.

"When I started, I was really naive," says Sandra Stokes, a preservationist who led the fight to reopen Charity. "I believed that when we released this study and we showed them that if it saved \$300 million and we didn't have to destroy a neighborhood, that we could get health care and the teaching hospital back in three years, that they would be excited. I didn't know I'd become the target after that.... Once we released the study, they attacked us immediately. They said that we didn't know what we were talking about. They said it had to be studied. It's, like, Whoa, wait. We just released really good information. Why are they attacking?"

The fight was over more than simply a sturdy old building versus what Stokes calls "a new shiny thing." The political powers of the state were moving to eliminate the very idea of Charity Hospital, the idea that had animated the six hospitals that had borne that name for more than 250 years. (One LSU administrator referred regularly to "the stigma" of Charity, which astounded patients and doctors alike.) After the storm had passed through, privatization was in the following wind. New governor Bobby Jindal had been elected on a platform that promised he would close all the charity hospitals around the state, which he did almost immediately. Bennett deBoisblanc works at the new medical center and sees the demise of Charity as part of something that was inevitable. "Ten years later, there's been a lot of healing," he says. "All New Orleanians talk about events pre-K and post-K, before the storm and after the storm. I think those who experienced loss carry that with them in a very bitter way, even to this day. But I think that many, many people feel that through this loss, there is an opportunity to rebuild in a new and better way. Out of any loss, there's an opportunity for rebirth.

"There's so much history at the hospital. There's only a handful of hospitals in the country that were these grande dames, these magnificent teaching hospitals. I do think, though, that a lot of what we are nostalgic about in the loss of those hospitals has to do with the fact that we had places where we could pack in poor people, where white doctors could learn how to practice medicine. I think it's time that we give up the past."

James Moises worked with deBoisblanc, and he laughs when he mentions how it was that they ended up on opposite sides of the fight to reopen Charity Hospital. "His state of mind would be totally different than mine because he's in the posse," Moises says. "So I mean, of course, and the new hospital's here

to stay, it's just what the process was. I think the former governor of Louisiana said it nicely. Trying to remember how he quoted it. Edwin Edwards. For as bad as he was, he really was the governor for the poor people. And yet he may have stolen. But at least he did something good for the state, versus these other politicians, especially the ones that are there now, they steal and do nothing for the state. So he said something which was really kind of right on. He said just 'cause you're poor doesn't mean you're irresponsible. I think that was the term he used, which is true. They just can't get out. They can't get ahead." But they once had a place to get well. They once had a place where the mosquitoes did not go. But it did not gleam. It was not new. And that turned out to be the death of it.

This has been New Orleans ever since the waters rolled back-an endless struggle between what was and what can be, between endless loss and boundless opportunity. And parts of the city truly have enjoyed an astonishing renaissance. The Warehouse District is now a busy warren of art galleries, small restaurants, and craft shops, all locally owned. There are hometown breweries and a thriving educational technology community. Up around Lakeview, where the Seventeenth Street levee collapsed as thoroughly as did the walls of the Industrial Canal, there are brand-new houses, all of them spread out in parfait colors. All of this will be celebrated during the anniversary of the storm, which is how it should be. But there is always in this city the mourning before the celebration, the long dirge measuring a life lost that comes before the trumpet calls everyone to joyful celebration of a life well lived. There is no parade here that is not preceded by a cortege.

Archaeologists will tell you that they'd rather find a civilization's dumps than its palaces. A people is better defined by the everyday things it uses and discards than by what it treasures and preserves. There can be more knowledge to be gained from a shard of broken pottery than from an oaken chest full of gold. Human archaeology is a dodgier proposition. Memory can be an unreliable pick, and emotion the riskiest and clumsiest of all the shovels. But there is in New Orleans a common human archaeology that persists under everything that is new and everything that is old, that persists under everything that has changed and everything that has remained the same, under everything that was lost forever and under all that has been reborn. Some places here were preserved. Some were not. Some people here were treasured and some were discarded, and that's what you find when you dig and you come to the layer in all of them where you find the great cataclysm that was the storm. It ravaged them all and connected them in ways that are still somewhat mysterious. The day they buried Daryle Holloway, they threw a second line for him that evening in the Upper Ninth Ward. Thunderstorms rolled in. The rain didn't stop the parade. 19

### **Simon Spurr**

[continued from page 183]

Meanwhile, Simon Spurr the brand chicken-headed it around the marketplace. Spurr says the company attempted to hire designers to replace him. (Nydes denies this.) Then, he says, they tried to sell the brand, but no one would buy. (Nydes denies this, too.) Finally, the company partnered with the discount retailer Gilt Groupe, which created a much cheaper line, confusingly called either Simon Spurr or Spurr NY, its styles recycled from what its namesake designer used to design. The clothes continue to sell on Gilt, though Spurr has yet to receive any profits.

Sitting in the lobby of the Mercer Hotel in SoHo, on a break from his day job as principal of a small financial firm, Nydes says he still isn't sure what went wrong. "The business was growing just how we wanted." (A followup conversation to confirm or deny Spurr and Fazio's version of events grew heated. Nydes claims that as a private company, the affairs of the Nydes-Spurr Group LLC are his business and his alone.) He is still hoping that the relationship can one day be salvaged. "Simon can come back to the table any time," he says. "We're just keeping the DNA alive." He should not hold his breath. "Sometimes his lawyer reaches out to my lawyer about getting the band back together," says Spurr. "But that will never happen as long as I'm alive."

It's a few days shy of his birthday and Spurr is wearing a beautiful cream cotton sweater he designed for Kent & Curwen's Fall 2014 collection. Though he continued consulting with Tommy Hilfiger on a parttime basis following his split from the brand, he didn't return to a starring role in fashion until 2013, when he went to work for his current employer, and he has helped restore vitality and verve to a very old, very English brand. The sweater he's wearing fits his athletic frame snugly and well. But, he says, sighing, "it didn't get picked up." What he means is that this is a garment he designed and created a sample of but it never got made for distribution and sales. "About 40 percent of what I do at Kent & Curwen doesn't get made... and it's usually my favorite stuff. It's not my vision, and I'm cognizant of that."

To say Spurr lost everything is a little silly. He has a good job. He has his health. He has a beautiful girlfriend. But he doesn't have the right to his own name as he sees fit, and he can't stop other people from saying and doing things in his name, either, and that's not nothing. The turmoil has taken its toll. "I can imagine a life without fashion, easy. My mother's family were sculptors, you know," he says musingly. "Her great-greatuncle made the National War Memorial in Canada." Spurr has recently taken up sculpture somewhat seriously. He works in marble, and one can imagine that he carves his name into each and every finished piece. SIMON SPURR, etched in stone, forever. 19

### **Credits**

### **Store Information**

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### THE COMMON CORE

CURRENT-AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT TEST (CAAT)
BY BRIAN FRAZER

- 1. What is the next item in this sequence?
  Minimum-wage job,
- check-cashing place, drinking problem,
- Cheetos
  - B Poverty
- © Tech CEO
- 2. Which of the following is least like the other three?
- Unarmed guy
  - Running white guy
  - © Black guy
  - Dead guy



- 3. Polar bears used to live on ice. Now they're floating away down rivers on little sheets of ice. How do you explain this?
- They're commuting to their new jobs at the salmon farm.
- B Humans + CO<sub>2</sub> + sunshine
- © I'm no scientist.
- Penn & Teller, yo! That guy who never says nothin' is sneaky.
- **4.** Decode the acronym AFAYC.
- Ask for a yellow crayon.
- As far as you're concerned.
- © All frankfurters are yummy, Caren!
- No, thanks. I'm too old for this shit.

### 5. What is it?

- An Iranian centrifuge.
- Final project from dropout at Selfie University.
- © Some stupid, expensive thing Kanye just bought.
- The next thing George Zimmerman will shoot.
- 6. If California needs to conserve 1.5 million acre-feet of water over the next nine months, which place will it most likely steal from next?
- A Hawaii
- Nestlé Waters™
- © That water park
- The Danny Thomas Spit-Take Museum
- 7. A driverless car drove forty-five miles in thirtythree minutes. How scary do you find that?
- (A) Verv.
- No more so than all those underqualified Uber dickheads.
- © I don't believe you. How does it get gas? I mean, does a hologram pump the unleaded?
- A lot less than Huckabee.

### 8. How is Tidal different from Spotify?

- A Jay Z owns it and some other dudes own the other thingie.
- B It isn't.
- © Jay Z's music is really hard to find on Spotify.
- Dude, I'm so confused!
  That's why I still buy
- 9. According to a recent Pew poll, what is the second-most-popular religious designation for Americans?
- Scientologist
- Muslim
- Whatever allows me to buy something in Hobby Lobby.
- 10. Connect the dots to reveal what Floyd Mayweather Jr. is doing with the \$200 million from the Manny Pacquiao fight.

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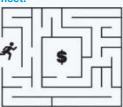
- 11. Season 3 of *True*Detective supposedly
  will star
- © George Stephanopoulos and "Weird Al"
- Taylor Swift and what's-his-face...the guy who played Kenneth on 30 Rock

- © Neil Patrick Harris and Al Pacino
- Don't care and still don't care.

### 12. Fill in the blank. Beer + Airbnb - \_\_\_\_ Trashed house.

- Airbnb insurance
- Earthquake retrofitting
- © Ten desired cable networks

### 13. Help Mary make ends meet.



### 14. Qatar is

- A great place for immigrants to work.
- Missing a u after the Q. What's up with that?
- The world's number-
- one exporter of bribes.

  Sepp Blatter's
  Waterloo

## **15.** How many Supreme Court justices might the next president be responsible for selecting?

- Next president?
  C'mon, like Obama's
  ever gonna leave!
- B A lot!
- © All of them after the big chicken-pox epidemic.
- Depends if Scalia gets a Fitbit. 18

# A CALM IS NOT DESIRABLE IN ANY SITUATION IN LIFE ABIGAIL ADAMS











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